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## Pertelote | Third Edition, Spring 1980

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# Pertelote

Third Edition Spring 1980



*A tale from...*

## The disco age

By DALE JOHNSON

I wasn't a hick then but I was, well, naive to a fault, and when a lower middle class farmer's son wins a scholarship to one of the biggest public universities in the country, his naivete can't help but show

University Housing, however, having a sense of humor, decided to deliver me of my ignorant state by throwing me in with Falstaff and McGraw. They became my tour guides in this strange new culture. Things were never the same again.

(See Page 2)



## Disco age

(Continued From Page 1)

Falstaff, named for his prodigious consumption of that brand of beer, was essentially God's gift to women in a three-year-old leisure suit. He had a beer-belly and a fair brain, but his prowess with women, he said, was his greatest talent.

McGraw was an English major who never let you forget it. He wore Coke bottle bottom glasses and, like Snoopy, "would one day write the great American novel," but was getting a teaching certificate just in case he had to support himself that way.

It was Falstaff who suggested that an upcoming SGA disco dance would be a great way to get my first taste of campus life. I agreed, but explained that I knew of no one to take. He promised to get me somebody from his overflow, but as the time drew near for the dance, I began to get worried and mentioned as much to McGraw.

"I need a date for the SGA disco dance, but I don't know who to ask."

McGraw jumped from his car and grabbed his English book.

"Shouldn't you have said 'whom' instead of 'who'?" He flipped pages.

"What? I don't care about 'who' and 'whom'! I want a date."

"You should know their uses. It's people like you who are bringing on the decay of the English language." He stopped his search and looked triumphant. "In formal writing, use 'whom' for all objects." You should've said 'I don't know whom to ask.'"

"I've got you," I said. "That's in formal writing. We were carrying on an informal conversation."

McGraw looked impatient. "How many times do I have to tell you that English should be standardized in all forms of expression? If John Simon were here—"

Luckily, Falstaff walked in or McGraw would have gone on all day about John Simon.

"Hey, everybody. What's going on?" he said, scratching his mangy beard which, he said, was going to drive the women mad once it filled out.

"McGraw was just about to tell me about John Simon again." I smiled, knowing what Fal was going to say. "John Simon? The guy's a bigot. He hates Blacks and Puerto Ricans, so he accuses them of destroying the English tongue."

McGraw turned red and stomped out of the room. Fal and I smiled at each other.

"Greg, ol' buddy," he said, "I've got your date problem solved. I should've thought of this before."

My horizon brightened.

"Who've you got for me?" "Nobody, but I've got a method. You see, lately, I've been reading up on the science of body language. Fascinating stuff. You can tell which girls like or dislike you by how they sit and move. It's sure fire. Never fails."

My horizon darkened. McGraw was back with a banana daqueri and said, "Oh, brother! First, it was pyramid power. Then came the Bermuda triangle, UFO's, TM, EST, biorhythms, hypnosis, and white magic. Now it's body language. Every month you're the resident expert on

chains. He gave me a coke spoon to wear, explaining it would make me look more natural. He told me to tell the girls anything I could think of to impress them, that they expected that. I should act suave; he said, and talk about astrology if the chance came up. I was ready.

Dante's Disco Inferno (named for the owner, Dante Miller) was an enormous place, having once been a roller rink. Dante, always clever, had the place set up like Hell in Dante's Inferno. There were nine circular tiers leading down to the dance floor. Each tier had 20 or 30 tables and its own bar.

## "Falstaff...was essentially God's gift to women in a three-year-old leisure suit."

something different."

"Scoff if you will, incredulous one," Fal said, "but it worked for me. Remember that girl I took out last weekend? I got her when I realized her body was saying 'I want you, Falstaff, you lust-worthy devil.'"

McGraw guffawed. "She said all that? She must've had a very articulate body."

"She didn't say it in so many words, but she said it, and you know what happened. Before I knew it, she had robbed me of my virtue. Now I'm no longer pure, no longer chaste. I'm worldly, I'm tainted, I've been ravished, ravaged, and violated. And I owe it all to body language!"

Fal stood and walked across the room dramatically, looking very proud. He put his hand to his chest and tried his best to look moved.

"Ah, sex. Sex! Sex, my dear gentlemen, makes the world go round and anyone who says different is a liar. You may not believe me now, but once you have experienced it, you will be a carnal beast as I am," he sighed. "There is nothing on God's earth like sex."

McGraw and I looked at each other and raised our eyes to heaven. We'd heard this a thousand times before.

Fal soon returned to himself and picked up his original train of thought. "So, to get back to body language, we're going to Dante's Disco Inferno tonight. While Greg circulates amongst the girls, I'll sit somewhere and observe. When a girl shows interest in Greg, I'll give him a signal, he'll make his move, and voila! He has a date!"

I don't know why, but I agreed to go along, hoping it would work. Before we left, Fal put on his yellow leisure suit and about ten disco

Each bar had a speciality drink corresponding to its circle (like the Lusty Lime Daqueri or the Tequila or Treachery). To complete the affect, Dante painted the whole place fire engine red.

We got to Dante's about 8 that night. There were about 200 to 300 people at Dante's, with about 100 on the dance floor, each doing a different dance. A local D.J. was sitting in a little box playing Donna Summer sex songs at 200-plus decibels and speaking discotease. Lights were going on and off all over the place and a silver ball was twirling on the ceiling. McGraw, who was writing a book called "Tales of the Disco Age," described a disco as "A writhing sea of flesh," and that's about what it looked like.

McGraw and I walked in and sat at a table in the second circle. Falstaff swaggered in and looked like he was going to take command of the room by force of his personality alone. He looked a little disappointed when every girl in the place didn't stop dancing and begin gasping at his arrival. He joined McGraw and me at our table.

"Let's get started, Greg," he said. "I bet this won't take five minutes."

"Let me get a drink first," I begged. I was a little nervous.

"No, You can get one after, as a sort of celebration. You can even buy me one for my trouble. But get the girl first."

"You don't even have the book with you," McGraw said. "How'll you know they're interested?" McGraw had somehow already gotten a Lusty Lime Daqueri.

Falstaff tapped his forehead. "I'll know. I've got the book memorized and I've had field experience." He looked at me. "Get going,

Greg!"

I saw a beautiful blonde alone on the eighth circle. I had begun my descent into hell toward her when suddenly I was stopped by a rather attractive girl who seemed very taken by my coke spoon.

"Hey, man, come sit with me," she said. Being no fool, I complied.

"What's your philosophy of life?" she asked. "You can really tell something about somebody from his philosophy of life."

I gaped. The girl was spaced out. All I could come up with as an answer was something I had had to

memorize in high school.

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more: it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury."

"Oh wow!" she said. Her eyes widened. "Deja vu! I'm having a deja vu attack. I'll bet we were lovers in some previous life and you said that to me in some cafe in Paris."

"No. It's from Macbeth. You know, by Shakespeare." She leaned close to me and whispered, "You got any nose candy on you?"

"What?" "You know. coke. Cocaine. Got any?"

"Not on me," I said, thinking fast.

"Oh man, I'd do anything for a snort." She looked me right in the eye. "Anything."

I looked up at Fal. He was holding his nose to tell me that the girl found me repulsive.

"You think we could go somewhere and be alone?" she asked... If I had ever seen a wanton woman, this was one, but I explained that, due to a recent skiing injury, I was "incapable." She was sympathetic. I left and went up to Fal.

"That girl practically asked me to bed and you said she didn't want me! Not that I would've gone, but I can't believe she wasn't interested."

"She wasn't," Fal said. "She must be a tease."

McGraw died laughing, now on his third daqueri. Falstaff smirked.

"Greg, try that brunette in the fourth circle. I assure you this'll work. I know."

I grumbled but went down to the brunette. I recognized her as Melisa ("Lisa to my friend") Harringer. She was in my comp. class. I had lusted after her heartily until

I had seen her with a football player. At that moment, though, she was alone, so I slid into the seat beside her.

"Hello. I'm Greg Moon. I'm in your comp. class this semester. Recognize me?" "No," she said. I appreciate honesty.

"Well, I don't guess you would. I cut class a lot to go hang gliding and skin diving. Two really great sports. You ever glide or dive?" I was really cooking.

"No," she was twirling her hair and staring in space.

The wind was leaving my sails.

I looked at Melissa again to make sure I hadn't missed something. She seemed to be putting all conscious thought into breathing. I excused myself and went up to Fal.

"Are you crazy? She didn't even know I was there and you said I could..."

"Look, Greg, you've got to trust me. She really likes you. She was twirling her hair and that's a sure sign of interest."

I looked back down and saw a guy sit by her. Suddenly, she was all smiles and full of talk—everything but the monosyllabic stone I had been with a few minutes before.

"What's her body saying to him?" I asked.

Fal looked and said, "That guy's really turning her off. She can't stand him."

McGraw died laughing and spilled a daqueri.

"Let's go," I said.

We went.

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I did eventually get a date. It was just like in some old movie. I met her at a local laundromat when both of us tried to use the same machine. We nearly had an argument right there, but I struck up a pleasant conversation (after, of course, letting her have the washer first) and discovered that she was just what I was looking for.

I asked her to dinner and, later, to a dance. She said yes to both. We had a romantic time together, just talking and laughing. I saw a lot of her after that.

When I went home the night of the dance, I found Falstaff asleep on the floor with one of his white magic books open to seduction spells. McGraw, too, had fallen asleep reading, but his was a grammar book. Apparently, both were waiting to hear how I made out. I didn't even bother to wake them. I just went to bed and dreamed. I was Prince Charming.

## Shanna

By LYNN CORDLE

Connie sighed as she mopped up the juice her fifteen-year-old daughter Shanna had spilled.

"They grow up so fast," she thought to herself. She wondered if they ever outgrew stages. Connie let her mind wander back to when, at six, Shanna had discovered a secret friend. What a trying time that had been. And to think that when Shan finally gave up her imaginary friend, she had actually cried! Cried, mind you! Where was the relief she should have felt? Shouldn't she have been glad that Shan was beginning to separate reality from fantasy? But she hadn't felt relieved. Instead, she had felt empty—as though Jeffrey had somehow been a part of her.

He came as suddenly as he went. Shanna had marched into the kitchen one afternoon and demanded two glasses of milk.

"What's wrong with one?" Connie asked her.

"Jeffrey needs one, too."

"And who is Jeffrey?"

"Just Jeffrey, that's who."

Connie's patience was wearing thin. "Well, where is this Jeffrey?"

"Right here."

"Right where?"

"Here. No one can see him but me," Shanna confided.

Connie gave up and poured two glasses of milk. "Enjoy your milk, Jeffrey. Would you two like some cookies?"

Shanna giggled.

"What's so funny?"

"Jeffrey can't hear you. He can't hear anybody but me," she explained.

"Oh. Well, maybe you should ask him if he wants some cookies, then."

And thus began those trying years. Jeffrey was always doing things that had Shan done them, she should have been punished. For instance, he was always leaving toys in the middle of the living room floor, and he hardly ever remembered to turn off the water when he finished brushing his teeth. He also had a bit of "undoing" Shanna's bed after she had made it up, or messing up her room just when she got through cleaning it up. Oh, the milk

(See SHANNA, Page 14)

There's a man with a beard in Iran Who says that he's God's leading man. His sandals and robe are known 'round the globe. We'll shoot him real soon if we can.

— Kathy Sheehy



# Jeannie and her bottle

By PAMELA HARTDEGEN

On a clear, summer night the Willards were having a party. Jeannie Brewer, Cindy Willard's best friend, felt slightly uncomfortable about attending such an affair because not long ago a similar situation had so drastically re-arranged her life. Jeannie remembered the string of events as she saw someone with a glass of wine in his hand.

Jeannie was a freshman in high school: a fourteen year old girl with long brown hair and chestnut brown eyes. When the sunlight danced on her hair, the light shades of red and brown glistened. Jeannie's spontaneous smile added a sparkle to her eyes as they silently laughed. The sparing use of make-up added a look of life to her otherwise pale face. Jeannie was a petite girl of about four feet eleven inches tall. Her slight frame gave her casual clothes an air of fashion. Jeannie appeared not to be unlike many other freshmen.

Being a freshman is frequently a traumatic experience for some, yet for Jeannie it was even more so. Jeannie was a shy person who felt lonely and uncomfortable in a crowd. A fear of not being liked or accepted by her peers had surrounded her since her earlier days of grade school.

While some girls looked on high school as a new way to make friends, Jeannie saw it as another place in which she wouldn't be accepted. Many people who entered as freshmen came along with their friends; since everyone Jeannie knew went to a different school, this made her feel even lonelier.

As the year progressed, Jeannie found it considerably harder to keep a bright outlook on life, for no friends had emerged from brief conversations with passersby in the corridors of the buildings. A constant feeling of loneliness consumed her as her dismal

view of each day grew dimmer. Jeannie's inadequate feeling when around people didn't help matters either. Walking to class became a chore rapidly. The only thing deemed worse by Jeannie was having no one to talk to before class.

However, in two of her classes Jeannie noticed a girl named Ann, who seemed to be very popular with everyone, and Cindy, who was quite the opposite of her friend Ann. Ann looked like the athletic type. She was very domineering, yet fun-loving, and she always had a smile on her face.

Cindy, on the other hand, was a petite girl who appeared to be a follower rather than a leader. This small group captured Jeannie's attention because of the apparent contrasts of its members. Cindy was like a shadow of Ann, and looked to her companion for guidance. Still she always kept some distance between them as if some undesired characteristic of Ann's could possess her if she got too close.

One day after classes, Jeannie asked Cindy for a math assignment because she had missed her morning classes. The two girls soon became friends. Before classes began one morning, Cindy stopped Jeannie and said, "Hey, there's going to be a party at Ann's house Friday night, wanta come?"

"Sure, I guess. You going?"

"If you go I will. I told Ann that if you didn't go, I wouldn't."

"Ask Ann what time and give me a ring tonight. There's the bell. Bye Cin."

At the party Ann had a couple of bottles of wine and some beer. Ann and her guests were alone in the house, so there was no fear of being discovered. Everyone except Jeannie and Cindy drank abundantly. Both girls carried a glass to avoid

feeling out of place. Within an hour almost everyone was drunk.

"Cin, lets leave," Jeannie half-whispered. As Jeannie glanced around, she observed that Cindy was nowhere to be seen.

"Cin, Cin," shouted Jeannie as she turned around, "Cin."

This exclamation didn't seem to affect anyone because no one ceased their drawling, dispersed, mostly inaudible conversation to inquire about the meaning of exclamation. When Jeannie

***"Being a freshman is frequently a traumatic experience..."***

found Cindy she was sitting on a couch with a glass of wine in her hand.

On the way home Cindy explained that the couch was the only place that she could escape Ann. She then warned Cindy of her disquieting uneasiness of Ann. After a short pause, intended to allow Jeannie a chance to absorb all that her new-found friend had informed her of, the girls admitted to each other that each had taken a few sips of wine but no more.

The next day at school the two girls commented on the party, especially about Ann. After all was said, the subject was dropped. On Wednesday, Cindy extended to Jeannie the same invitation to Ann's party Friday night which she had earlier received herself. Following a discussion on the matter, they both agreed to go and leave the party when things got rough.

Ann, noticing that Jeannie and Cindy had no drinks in their hands, persuaded the girls to have at least one drink. Jeannie soon realized that Ann had so many friends because she did what was acceptable to the crowd. Ann, having convinced Jeannie of instant friend-

ships, soon had Jeannie drinking heavily and laughing with some of her friends. Around 10 o'clock, Cindy looked for Jeannie to go home, for the party had begun to get boring for her.

When Cindy found Jeannie, though, Jeannie was with a large group of classmates who were laughing, joking and drinking. The first thing

Cindy thought about was that that unknown fear she had of Ann had some how captured Jeannie. Cindy tried to talk

Jeannie into leaving, but nothing could persuade her. Finally, getting tired of an unworkable situation, Cindy left. Within the next few weeks she had noticed a continual change in her friend. Jeannie had begun to be late for classes, to forget assignments, and to hang around with Ann all the time. This alone didn't bother Cindy so much as Ann and Jeannie's purposeful avoidance of her. Cindy concluded that Ann had taken advantage of her friend's impressionability. She knew that if Jeannie was cajoled enough she would do almost anything to gain more acceptance among her other classmates.

Without being able to speak to Jeannie after classes for a couple of weeks, Cindy tried another approach.

"Hey, kid?", questioned Cindy soberly over the phone, "There's this great sci-fi movie at the cinema tonight..."

"Not tonight, ok."

"Ya going to a party?"

"Yep."

"Is there going to be drinking going on? Will you be drinking?"

"Will you get off my back."

"Why don't you stop drinking?"

"I can stop drinking any time I wanta; I just don't wanta. I need a drink, gotta go."

The next day at school, Cindy found Jeannie in the gym without Ann, and they fought about Jeannie's drinking problem. Jeannie denied this and their fight continued. Cindy asked her to prove it by going one whole day without drinking. Jeannie promised this and they parted.

It was relatively easy the next morning for Jeannie to go without a drink but by lunch time she was frantic and snuck to the back of the gym to steal a drink. She had noticed that her feeling of loneliness disappeared more and more with each drink. Reality was of no concern to her when she was drunk and Jeannie liked it that way. A few weeks passed, and Jeannie's problem only became worse.

For a long time, Cindy couldn't figure out a way to help her friend. Then, one day Cindy saw a commercial on television about Alcoholics Anonymous. After much discussions and a few fights, Cindy convinced Jeannie to go once with her. That night Jeannie felt terribly out of place and when the feeling became too fierce she went in search of a drink.

Upon being told by one girl there that there was no alcohol in the room, Jeannie was ready to leave, but she stayed because of her previous promise to Cindy. The last straw was when some teenagers close to Jeannie's age told of their "alcoholic" problem. Promise or no promise, Jeannie got up and left.

The next day she ran into a girl who was at AA the night before and had spoken. The two girls talked for a while and Jeannie went home with a lot to think about that night. About nine the phone

rang.

"Hey, kid," asked Cindy, "Are you going to AA tonight? I'll go with ya. It'll do ya good."

"OK. See ya tonight."

As soon as Cindy hung up the phone she became relieved at her friend's apparent willingness to fight her problem. For a number of weeks, the two girls faithfully went to the A. A. meetings. By the time school was over, Jeannie had almost overcome her problem.

Cindy left in the middle of June to go on a vacation with her family. The afternoon she came home, she ran into Jeannie.

"Hi Cin. Did ya have a good vacation?"

"Sure did. How are ya?"

"Great, thanks. I've been keeping up with AA and I'm glad. I feel really good."

"Super. Oh, there's a pretty good sci-fi movie showing at the cinema, I hear it's pretty good at least. Cokes are on me."

"Sounds like a great idea, friend."

"It doesn't seem that long ago," thought Jeannie. Both girls had graduated and they would start college in the fall. As Jeannie remembered the past, a shiver ran down her spine. For a split second, that feeling of helplessness returned. Suddenly, she felt a slight tap on her shoulder. When she turned around she saw Cindy with a questioning look on her face. Jeannie smiled her biggest smile ever which quickly became a giggle.

"Don't look so grim; it was my memory," said Jeannie. "I'm glad I changed; I'm glad we're still friends."

"Just don't forget that we are friends."

Jeannie momentarily glanced back at the glass with a sigh of relief. Cindy handed her a glass of gingerale and the two girls walked away smiling in the comfort of each other's company.

## Miss Cheri

By PAMELA HARTDEGEN

"Miss Cheri, Miss Cheri," cried Bobby as he entered through the kitchen door from the backyard.

"Bobby, what is it sweetie?"

"Cheri turned around from the stove to see a shattered four-year-old boy bleeding at the knee."

"Miss Cheri it hurts."

"Oh sweetie what happened?"

"I falded."

"I fell."

"No, I falded," Bobby demanded.

"Come here."

Cheri lifted Bobby to a spot on the counter to sit down. "Let me see. Where did you fall?"

"I was running on some rocks and I tripped and hurted myself."

"I hurt myself."

"No, I hurted myself! It's MY story," Bobby angrily corrected again.

"This medicine is gonna sting, so I'll tell ya a secret. If ya blow hard it won't sting as bad, ok."

"Ok."

"Why were ya running on

the rocks anyway sweetie?"

"Ohhh Miss Cheri that stings bad!"

"Blow quick, hurry."

Cheri blew on Bobby's knee and Bobby soon joined in.

"Why were ya running?"

"I was chasin' a frog."

Nooo. Please don't put more on."

"A frog, ick! Boys will be boys, I suppose."

"That hurted."

"Blow quick."

After a few seconds of blowing on his knee, Bobby's tears stopped.

"Here, let me put this on."

"It'll sting again."

"No it won't. It'll make it feel better, see."

"That's cold."

"Put a bandaaid on it and, voila! Can ya do me a favor sweetie?"

"Yes ma'am."

"Can ya bend your knee for me?"

"Uh-hu, see."

"Silly Goose, not that knee, the one with the hurt."

"Uh-uh. It'll hurt."

"But if ya don't move it it'll stay that way when it gets better."

"Really Miss Cheri?"

"Honest sweetie."

"Ok."

Cheri put Bobby on the floor, but instead of just bending his knee he ran out of the kitchen door into the backyard.

"Bobby be careful. You only have one knee left."

A Jax State co-ed, ill fated, One night became intoxicated; She threw up the foul brew On her boyfriend's new shoe And that was the last time they dated.

— Karen Griffin



# Professor Vorchek: Chapter I

By MARY JOHNSON

In the fall of '57, I started my freshman year at King's College. The first morning went quickly. After lunch, my first class was World History. I found the classroom and took a seat in the first row. Five old friends from high school were also in the class. Since it was early, we sat and talked about the summer.

At exactly 1 o'clock, the door opened and a man goose-stepped across the front of the room. When he reached the center of the desk, he did a right face and stood there silently, looking at the back wall. He was a tall thin man of about 40 with longish black hair, a pale face, hawk-like features and dark eyes. He wore a black suit and tie, with a white shirt. On his hands he had white cotton gloves.

He never once looked at us. His eyes were fixed on the back wall approximately two feet below the ceiling. Suddenly he opened his mouth and said one word, "Vorchek". We all looked at each other.

Then he started to recite in a low voice. "Chapter One-The Early World." At least that's what I assumed he meant to say—What we all heard sounded like "Cha-Pt'r OO n ee - Da EEarl yee Word."

Not only did our teacher speak in a low voice, with a terrible foreign accent, but he seemed to have a speech defect also.

After a few minutes of listening, the class grew restless. A student in the back asked him to "speak up, please." His request was ignored. He went on and on and no one could understand him.

Finally one of the students told us that he was reciting the textbook from memory. We turned to look at our books. Just at that point there was a picture in the text. Our teacher paused, apparently to allow us time to appreciate the artwork, then he continued speaking.

He had a very soothing voice, so calming, in fact, that after about 30 minutes of listening, I fell asleep and slid out of my chair. When my head hit the floor, I woke up with a scream. The other students gathered around.

Our teacher spoke on. At the exact stroke of two, he turned and marched out the door.

On Tuesday, before class, there was quite a discussion. We found that our teacher's name was Vorchek. He was new in the school and none of the other teachers seemed to know him. We also found out that his class was a required course. We couldn't drop it. All of the other sections were full.

The second day with Vorchek was like the first. He marched in, stopped, said "Vorchek" and started to recite. He droned on and on ignoring our questions and staring at the back wall, above our heads. He did not call roll. Neither did he pass an attendance sheet around. I fell asleep again and again. At exactly 2 o'clock, he marched away. Someone woke me up.

After class rumors flew. Students speculated that Vorchek was deaf, a vampire, a zombie man, a martian or spaced out on drugs. They also wondered whether he was an educational computer, programmed to teach WH 101. One wit conjectured that perhaps he was a dead man, resurrected by the science dept., a clever innovation calculated to save the college the cost of a teacher's salary. Students also speculated he might be an aristocrat—who thought our questions weren't worth answering.

Letters of complaint about Vorchek, written to the department head and to President Myzorsk went unanswered. Letters to the student paper were not printed. Our teachers said they "didn't know anything and didn't want to know anything" about Vorchek. The students started to complain that they were having weird dreams about him.

After a few more days of his endless mumuring the class became unruly. In one corner, some students listened to a baseball game on a radio. When one of the girl's became engaged, we had pizza and beer delivered to the classroom. We ate, drank, slept and partied. Vorchek went on and on. Some of the students stopped coming to class. Others started to play cards and roll dice. More put chairs together and took a nap.

Finally, we took up a collection, out of boredom. The \$20 raised would go to the person who could get Vorchek's attention. We tried!

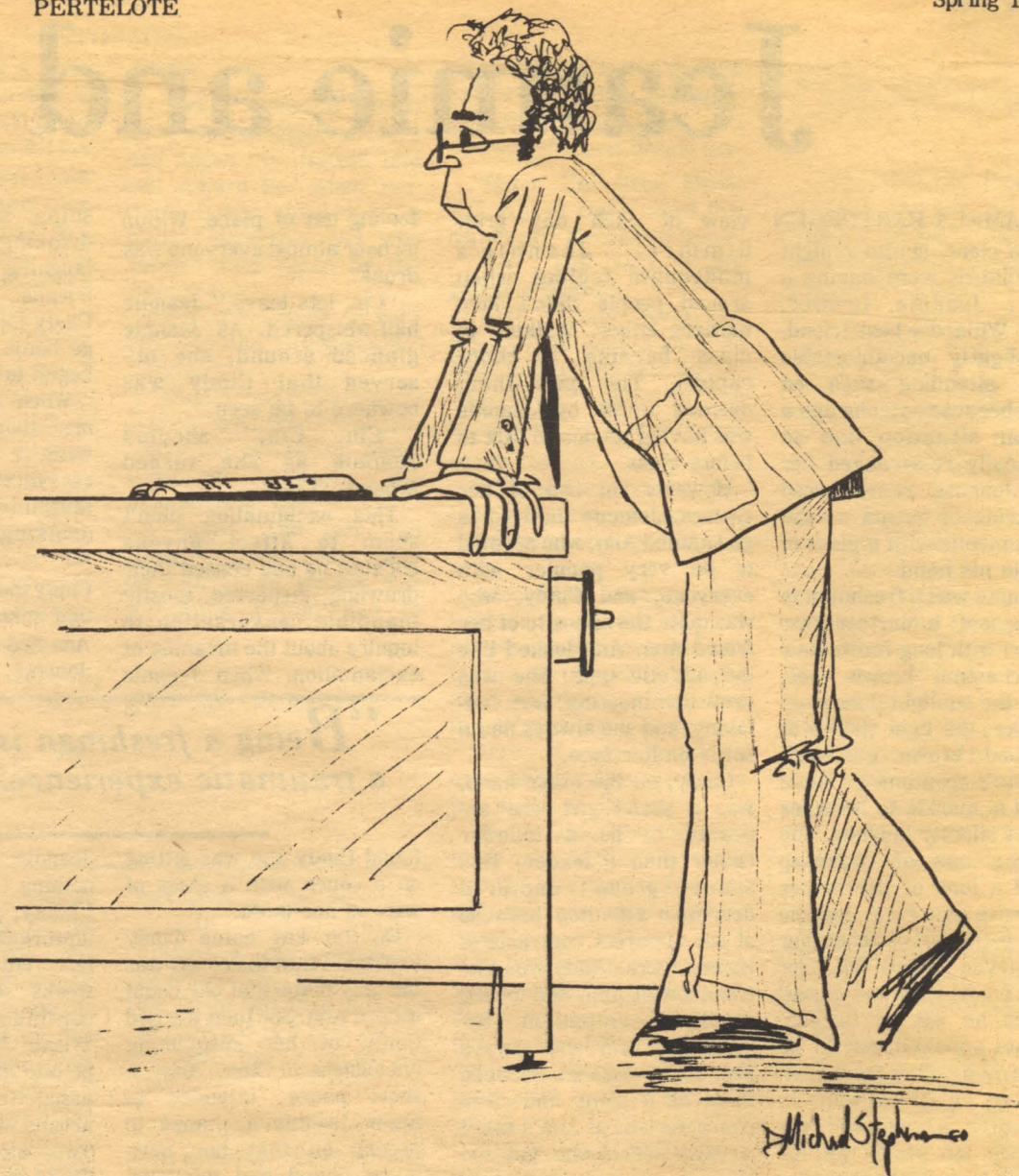
Peter stood up and yelled, "Mr. Vorchek, Dr. Vorchek, Professor Vorchek, Dean Vorchek." No answer—he was totally ignored.

"Maybe he's one of the nobility," someone suggested. Peter tried again: "Sir, Vorchek, Lord Vorchek, Count Vorchek, Prince Vorchek"—No reply.

In disgust Peter threw an empty Coke can at Vorchek. Although it missed his head by only a fraction of an inch, Vorchek neither flinched nor stopped talking.

He's not human, we agreed! The class ended and Vorchek marched away. We talked it over and decided to lock him out of the classroom just to see what he'd do.

On Friday, we all came early and locked the door at



12:55. At 1 o'clock, he came to the door, broke the glass with his gloved hand, reached in, turned the knob and entered. Utter silence followed! As a group we were terrified. Vorchek droned away as usual. I fought sleep. After he left we voted to attack him on Monday. First, with noise. I had decided to bring my cowbell to class. If that didn't work, we would pelt him with garbage. If we couldn't succeed, we decided not to come to class on Tuesday or for the rest of the term. "THE HECK WITH IT!" we said. We don't care anymore.

Monday afternoon, I took my cowbell to class. Some of the other students brought firecrackers, radios, a trumpet, cymbals, a starter's pistol, and even a barking dog on a leash. The Fresca twins dragged a can of garbage up from the lunchroom. We were ready!

At 1 o'clock, the meanest little old lady teacher I've ever seen came into the room.

"What the hell is the matter with you kids?" she screamed. "Are you all crazy?" Get rid of that garbage and put that dog outside. What are you anyway? Savages?"

"Where's Vorchek?" someone asked.

"Vorchek's dead," she said and started to cry. Vorchek dead—we were stunned.

"How?" we asked?

"He was shot to death during his 10:30 class," she sobbed. "One of the G. I. students went insane, yelled 'Communist' and shot him in the head."

Vorchek—a Communist? We hadn't thought of that. "Was he one?" someone asked.

"No," she said. "Your teacher was President Myzorsk's stepson. In Hungary, he was the author of many famous books on the Slavonic languages and a noted lecturer and personality. He had even been a fighter in the Hungarian Revolution. That's why he had to leave the country."

"Did he speak English?", I asked her.

"No," she answered. "But, he's only been here a few weeks."

President Myzorsk gave him this job.

I was shaken by her answers. We had been given a teacher who spoke no English, but was brilliant enough to memorize an entire textbook and to recite it day after day to students who couldn't begin to appreciate what he was doing.

We left ashamedly and quickly. Why didn't someone tell us? We'd have understood.

Or would we?



## Been there?

By PAMELA HARTDEGEN

While she stood in a line to wait her turn to register, Dianne overheard a girl mention that she couldn't register earlier because she had an OUTSTANDING BALANCE in her LIBRARY ACCOUNT. Dianne shrugged the information off when she remembered that she had hardly used the library all semester.

Nervously she glanced at her watch—ten-fifteen. She longed to hurry the process. Around ten thirty she casually looked over her DATA SHEET and was alarmed to discover in the right hand corner an OVERDUE LIBRARY FINE of fifty-five cents.

After despondently placing

her trial schedule on the Registrar's desk, Dianne became furious and hurried to the BUSINESS OFFICE to inquire about the book. The clerk she spoke to in the BUSINESS OFFICE referred Dianne to an OFFICE OF ACCOUNTS in the LIBRARY. By this time it was ten forty-five and Dianne had an eleven o'clock American Lit class. It would take at least twenty minutes to walk there, she thought, so even if I were to leave now I would be late.

When she arrived at the library, it was ten fifty. On the elevator, she again contemplated cutting class. But in the middle of rationalizing this decision,

the elevator came to "an abrupt halt.

Upon reaching THE OFFICE OF ACCOUNTS, she looked nervously at her watch and presented her situation to the clerk who in turn handed her a SLIP OF BLUE PAPER. Suddenly, the book came to mind.

Helen, a girl in one of Dianne's classes the previous semester, had borrowed a book that she had checked out, and lost it. What puzzled Dianne was that she also remembered Helen had agreed to pay a fine if there was one. Recognizing this betrayal, Dianne became even more angry.

To make matters worse

she had no change in which to pay THE SMALL FINE, fifty-five cents, so she had to wait while another clerk got her some change for a twenty dollar bill. As she waited she became increasingly apprehensive. At last (it was almost twelve o'clock) Dianne left the library with the mishap cleared up. She quickly headed toward THE BUSINESS OFFICE to correct the problem. The forceful wind threatened to hold her back with every step. There was a line waiting when she arrived.

This tedious mission finally accomplished, Dianne flew to Stephens Hall to check on her schedule. When she arrived at the

Registrar's desk, she was in time to hear the Registrar call out the names of those whose schedules had already been computed and finished.

Dianne jumped slightly and forced her way to the desk when she heard her name called. She handed the Registrar the WHITE RECEIPT that she has been given from the BUSINESS OFFICE, when her schedule was handed to her. At that moment time seemed to have stopped.

The Registrar looked up at Dianne and said sweetly: "It didn't matter, Dear. Your schedule could have been worked out easily enough without it."

# The strenuous life

By ROB SHELTON

"I preach to you then my countrymen, that our country calls not for the life of ease but for the life of strenuous endeavor."

—Theodore Roosevelt, April 10, 1899

++++

It was dark and mostly quiet inside the bus full of young men rolling along toward an island off the Atlantic coast. None of the nervously uncomfortable foot-shifting or snoring or even the paranoid outbursts of the fat boy in back disturbed Derek's train of thought. His composure remained a steady recycling of what he thought was an understanding of an emotion the Japanese call yugen. There is no translation in English.

"To watch the sun sink behind a flower-clad hill, to wander on and on in a huge forest with no thought of return, to stand upon a shore and gaze upon a boat that disappears behind distant islands, to contemplate the flight of wild geese seen and lost among the clouds."

The poet Seami said all these are yugen. Derek felt he understood, except that he was the one moving, not the boat or birds. It seemed that all the flows of his life stream had come to a series of interstices producing the southeastern bus trip. His old life was receding behind him with each revolution of the wheels as inevitably as the sunset he had watched through the tinted window.

"Oh mamma, what have I done? Driver won't you please let me off this bus? Don't care where, just anywhere. I just don't wanna go to boot camp. Lord, I've gone and done it now. What is that bad old drill instructor gonna do to me?" blubbered the fat boy. "I'm a 'gonna escape, I sure am. I feel sorry for you fools that's

gonna be stuck on that island."

Derek mused to himself that the fat boy must feel that he had made a wrong decision. But he had to have known what he was getting into. The recruiter talks honestly to us and tells the whole story in plain sincere English. They even give us a book to look at with lots of pictures showing the whole process in complete detail.

lights interspersed along the road. He later found out that the M. P. detachment even had special vehicles made to search for recruits who tried to escape through the swamp. The mud tractors, as they were called, could go anywhere and the M. P.s would find them if the alligators didn't get them first.

It seemed to take a long time to get into the main part

Stand on those footprints and wait until I tell you to go inside. Now move!"

Derek looked down at his feet. The footprints were about size 18 surrounding his size 9 feet. He could see over the other young men's heads a sign on the building over the doorway which said in gold letters on a scarlet background,

THROUGH THIS PORTAL PASS PROSPECTS

hand the sergeant snarlingly told him to be still and keep his hand where it was. Then a clerk came around and with a magic marker brusquely wrote 289 on the back of each recruit's hand. After filling out some forms, including insurance papers, the recruits were told where they would sleep.

Derek's bed had no sheets, no pillow, no blanket and was bowed almost as badly as a hammock. He felt oppressed by the presence of so many others in the receiving barracks. They wandered around shiftlessly, anxiously. He had no use for them, felt no relatedness to them, the common herd. He didn't know what the next step was but he felt confident that he was superior. It didn't bother him that he was

not physically large because he knew he had what it would take: guts.

Derek was the first one outside in the morning standing on the footprints waiting to go to breakfast chow. He thought he was really on the ball. The sergeant came around the corner of the building and told him to go back inside

(See LIFE, Page 14)

*"When I give the order I want all of you slimes to get off this bus. Run your lard asses out to the front of the white building, and look down at the ground."*

Everyone knows that the program involves some push-ups, marching around, and getting in the mud a little. It is all very obviously laid out. The fat boy was a chicken, obviously. But Derek knew he was brave and felt that he had proven it to himself. Like the time he hopped a freight train and rode it 30 miles and back or the time he jumped off a 60 foot bridge on a dare. Derek felt that the sergeants would recognize his determination and inherent superiority.

The relentless bus swooped up to the base's front gate, which was still on the mainland, and the M. P., recognizing it, waved the driver on. It went over a river bridge guarded by more M. P.s in case a recruit tried to get back over the river that way. The M. P.s were armed with .45 caliber pistols and billy clubs.

Looking out the window, Derek saw a swamp stretching out to the limit of vision provided by street

of the base. The fat boy had withdrawn into a silent, frozen paranoia. But Derek sat easily, engrossed in a luxurious self-confidence. No one made any noise at all, afraid to mobilize the base's oppressive atmosphere. They all knew what was next.

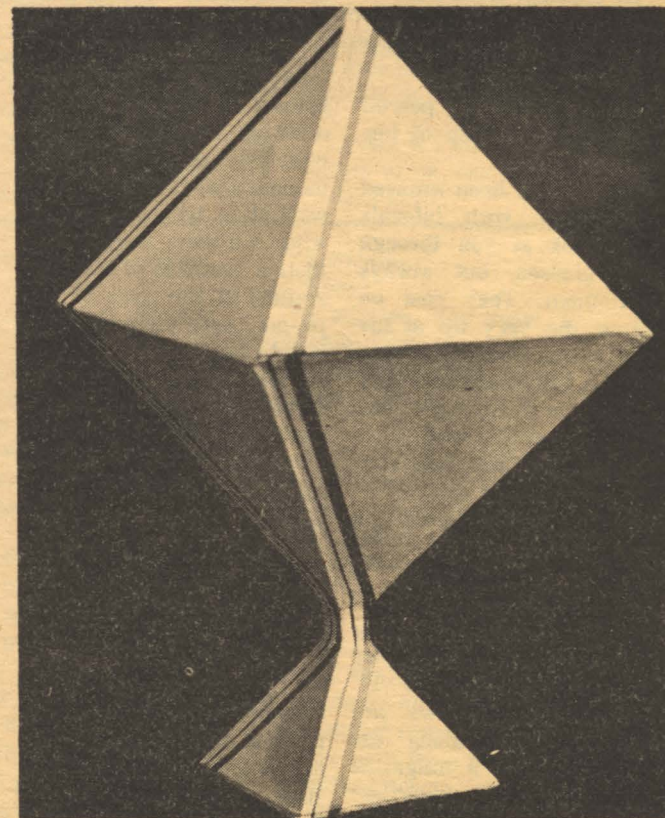
A sergeant in a campaign hat swiftly appeared on the bus when the door opened. The hat was pulled way down on his frowning forehead so that his grim eyes barely showed from under the brim. He stood in front, very erect, uniform astonishingly crisp for the pre-dawn morning hour and stared at the occupants seemingly knowing exactly what they all were thinking. With no preliminary welcome he growled tensely, "When I give the order I want all of you slimes to get off this bus. Run your lard asses out to the front of the white building, and look down at the ground. You will see footprints painted there.

FOR THE WORLD'S FINEST FIGHTING FORCE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS.

Derek felt that the sign was a challenge. "So," he thought pointedly, "I'm not a Marine yet, only a 'prospect.' Well, they'll see soon enough what kind of man I am and then they'll notice me and accept me as one of them."

The habitually disgusted sergeant told the herd of recruits to go in the door and look for a place to stand next to a table and put their right hands on the handprints painted there. Derek saw his hand surrounded by the outline and wondered to himself if this was a symbolic representation of the situation he was encompassed by.

Did the Marines want him as a person or as nothing but another pair of feet and hands? It grew uncomfortable standing that way but when he moved around and picked up his



Art by SUSAN FERGUSON

"Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire; you will what you imagine; and at last you create what you will."  
—George Bernard Shaw





# Talk is cheap

By KAREN GRIFFIN

"Uh, excuse me...I'm supposed to see Dr. Sutton..."

Mrs. Abercrombie peered at me over the top of her bifocals.

(I've always been amazed how people with bifocals never look at you through their glasses, but always over them. They rest on almost the very tip of the nose, so that when the person looks at you he appears very sneaky, as if spying at you over the top of a wall.)

"Are you? Are you supposed to be here now?"

"Well, Mother called this morning and..."

"Have a seat, please."

Dr. Sutton's office is L-shaped; that is, the waiting room is L-shaped. On either side of the spine of the "L" are chairs. Windows are spaced evenly along the right side, and a magazine rack holds all your favorites: Newsweek (September 21), Ladies Home Journal (November, 19-last decade), and a copy of Stories of Jesus for the kids, along with order blanks in the back so Johnny can have his own. (My

mother never did order one for me.)

I walked through and made a left turn at the bottom of the "L" and sat down on a cushioned bench built into the wall. I always thought it was for people who wanted to lie down. That's what I always used it for. Mother came in in a flurry, smiling at the rows of sick people, and plopped down beside me.

"Well, here you are. I finally got the car parked. Are you alright, Hon?"

"Yeah, I'm fine." (A rocket went off in my left sinus.)

"Are you warm enough?"

"Yeah, I'm fine." (It must have been ninety degrees in that place.)

"I was beginning to wonder if I'd ever find a parking place," she gushed, crossing her legs. She looked down at her small feet clad in soft, worn leather. "I want you to just look at these old shoes. I've had them for the longest. They sure are comfortable, though."

She grinned and looked around, sheepishly, so see if

anyone had been listening. You understand, of course, they were supposed to hear her. I, myself, was not in the mood for conversation. I preferred to make myself busy letting everyone know exactly why I was there. I coughed—quite loudly—and sat back to observe my audience. Now, they were a lively bunch for Saturday morning.

In the midst of it all sat a thin, pale, graying man with unruly hair and baggy trousers. He nodded to a woman near the door.

"How are you today, Miz Millwood?"

Silence for the space of a minute, and then she spoke.

"Well, I'm fine, but I'm not Miz Millwood."

The man stared at her, confused. He blinked his eyes. "Aw, that's right, you're Miz Roberts. I'm sorry."

Silence for the space of two minutes, and then: "Yuh didn't git neither one of 'em right."

The old man looked embarrassed. "Well, I'm just gonna be quiet."

Silence for another two minutes, and then. "I used to be a Millwood, but I'm a Calloway now."

"You're Horace's mama, ain'tcha?"

"Yessir."

He slapped his leg in delight. "I thought I knowed you!"

He was extremely pleased with himself. Settling back and folding his arms across his chest, he gazed across the room. He seemed to concentrate very hard...and then, as if someone inside his head snapped his fingers and shouted "Aha!", he pointed to a man across the room and declared, "You went to school at Hayden."

"Well, no sir, I went to Pennington."

The old man wrinkled up his forehead. "Are you sure? I know I seen you somewhere..."

"Well-I-I, I reckon you probably saw me when you worked with my brother. I think you used to cut hair for Verbon when he had that barber shop. Verbon was my brother."

(Mother whispered, "He's

talking about Verbon Blackwell.")

"I thought I knowed you from somewhere! Yeah, I always liked old Verbon." He paused, then added, "Of course, I 'uz used to him."

(His last remark nearly sent Mother into hysterics. Suppressing a giggle, she whispered to me, "He sounds like he's apologizing for liking the man. See, Verbon was real bad to go off and drink a lot. He was sort of the town drunk, I guess." She grinned. "I guess that was the nicest thing he could think to say about him, that he was 'used' to him.")

The younger man said nothing about the old man's last remark, and the conversation shifted quickly.

"Well, whatcha here for?"

The younger man held up a hand, blistered and red. "Burned my hand at work yesterday. Can't do a thing with it." He nodded in the direction of Dr. Sutton's office. "If he can't do anything for me, I reckon I'm just gonna cut it off and throw it away."

Several elderly women

nearby smiled. Horace Calloway's mother said, "Well bless your heart."

And a thin lady with sunken cheeks sighed, "Goodness knows this old earthly body ain't worth nothin' no way. We don't have it for long, but at least they's somethin' better a-waitin' for us. I get to feeling so sorry for people sometimes that don't have it as good as me. Folks is crippled and handicapped, and they struggle and some of 'em do alright. And here I sit tussin' about havin' a cold."

(Mother put her arm around me lovingly and asked, "Honey, do you want to lay your head over on Mama's shoulder?"

"No that's O.K. I'll be alright. Really."

"Why don't you just lay down and put your head in Mama's lap?"

What the hell, I thought. So what if you're twenty years old. **Humor her. Let her be a mama.** And so I just lay down and put my head in Mama's lap.

(See TALK, Page 13)



Communication

By LYNN CORDLE

"What time is it?"  
"Twelve-fifteen. Why?"  
"I have a class in 15 minutes, that's why."  
"Oh. Did you go to the basketball game Saturday night?"  
"What basketball game? I had to work. This crazy idiot came into the store about 15 minutes before closing to buy his wife a birthday present. He didn't even know what size she --"  
"The game was great! We beat 'em by at least 30 points! The best part was when --"  
"Yeah, well this guy, like I was saying, didn't even know what size dress his wife wore and he was in there trying to pick her out one! He tried to get this other salesgirl to model it for him. Can you believe that? I sure pity his wife."  
"Yeah. What about Friday night?"  
"What about Friday night?"  
"Didya go to the game?"  
"I thought you said it was Saturday night."  
"There was one both nights."  
"Oh. No. But you'll never guess what happened to me."  
"It was a good game, too. Not as good as Saturday's game, though. There were more people there Saturday night."  
"I was gonna study for that history test, but Sally called. She was so upset."  
"Yeah? I saw that boy she's been dating at the games. And he was with a different girl both nights. Wow, you shoulda been there. That was some game. One of our guys scored 30 something points."  
"That's what Sally was upset about."  
"That somebody scored 30 points in one game?"  
"No, dummy. That Tom was at the game with another girl."  
"Two other girls."  
"Whatever. Anyway, she was furious. They were supposed to have a date Friday night, but he didn't show. So she called me up and she was fighting mad!"  
"That reminds me! There was a fight Friday night, but I missed it. I was about 15 minutes late getting there because I had to work 'til seven and I just couldn't get there in time."  
"So I went over to her place, but when I got there, she was gone. She left a note saying they'd gone to some guy's house and for me to come over."  
"One of the guys got hurt pretty badly at Saturday's game. I think they took him to the hospital. He was going up for the rebound--"  
"Anyway, I didn't go because I don't know this guy too good, and I've got lots to do, right? So I went back to my place and who do you think was there?"  
"Your mother?"  
"No. Seriously."  
"The Pope?"  
"Honest to God, you're impossible! Hank was there."  
"Hank Aaron?"  
"No. Hank, the guy in my math class last semester. You know."  
"Oh yeah. That Hank."  
"Yeah, and he wanted me to go to this party with him or something."  
"Well, did ya?"  
"No. We had a flat tire on the way, and his spare was flat, too, so we ended up walking a half a mile or so before someone picked us up."  
"Gee, too bad. You shouldn've come to the game. It was great."  
"Hey, I gotta get to class. It's been great talking to ya. It's nice to have friends you can talk to."  
"Yeah. It's nice to be able to talk to ya. See ya."  
"Bye now."

By DALE JOHNSON

"How do you like this place?"  
"It's great. I like old places. They have atmosphere or character or something. I can't put my finger on it."  
"I know what you mean. I try to eat here every chance I get, when I have the money."  
"I feel sort of like I've been here before. But I never have. You know what I mean?"  
"Uh oh. Don't tell me you believe in reincarnation."  
"Not really. I'd like to, though. Wouldn't it be sort of romantic if everyone was reincarnated and in each life they fell in love with the same person. Each new life would be a giant quest to find that one person, no matter

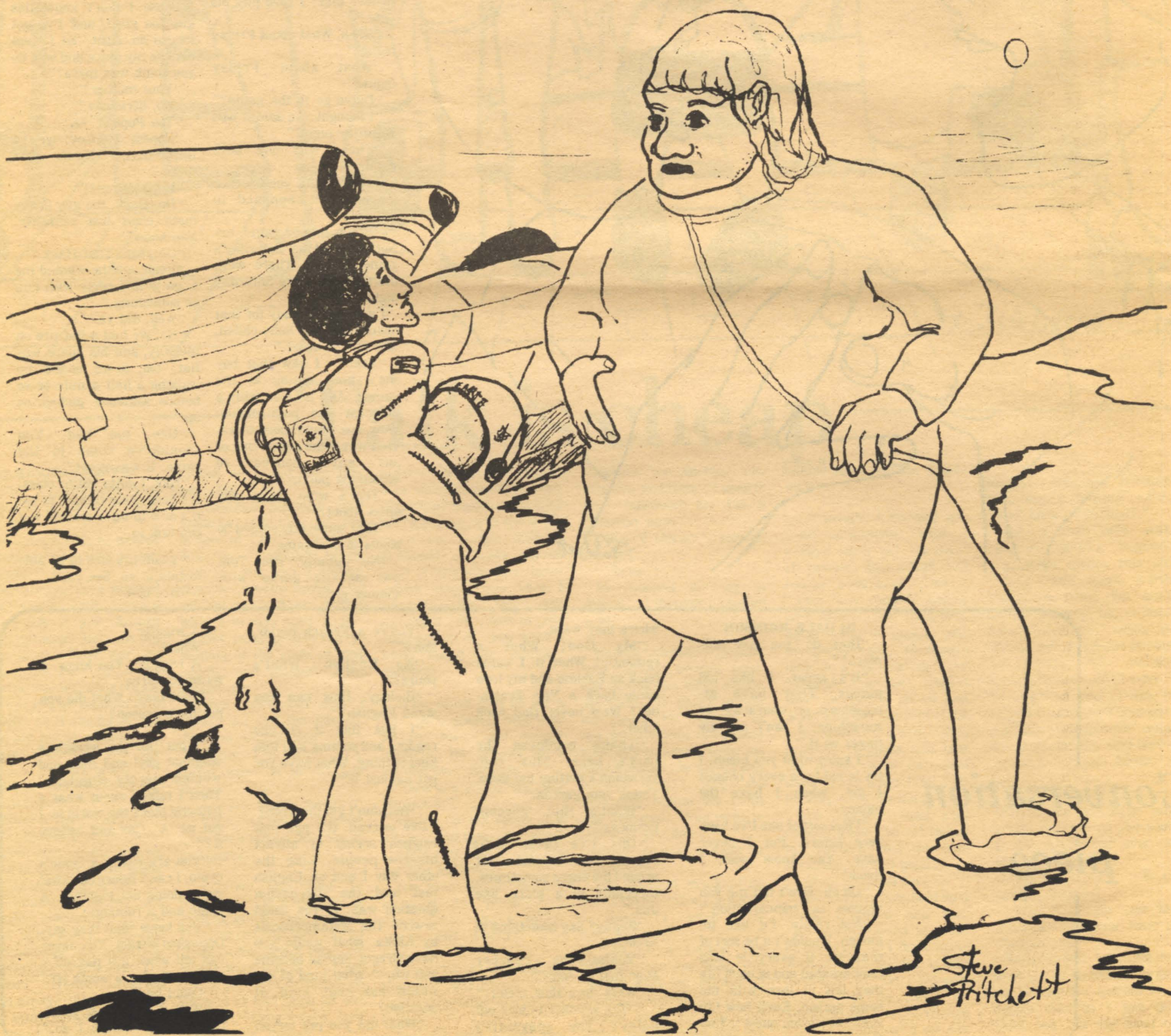
where they were."  
"My God! What a romantic! What if I came back an Eskimo and my love came back a New Zealander? We'd never find each other."  
"Thank goodness the food's here. This conversation's getting too deep. Thank you, garcon."  
"What's this 'garcon' business?"  
"Oh I've taken some French and it oozes out around the edges sometimes, especially in a place like this."  
"Really? Say something in French."  
"Voulez-vous coucher avec moi ce soir?"  
"What does that mean?"  
"The weather is nice out today." The spaghetti's great."

"You're a French major, huh?"  
"No English. What's yours?"  
"Biology. How can you stand English?"  
"I just like it. I like reading and writing and that kind of thing. What have you got against it?"  
"Well, don't get me wrong. I like to read. It's just that English seems to attract bizarre people. Like the other day I had an English test and the discussion question was 'If you could rewrite The Metamorphosis by Kafka, what would you have Gregor Samsa become and why?' What kind of nut would ask that kind of question?"  
"What did you put for an answer?"

"A wiggler."  
"What?"  
"A wiggler. You know, a mosquito larva."  
"Good Lord! What did you put for a reason?"  
"I put 'All the world's a stagnant pool and men and women merely wigglers.' Then I talked about what a pathetic place the world is. I got an 'A'. Can you believe it?"  
"You are really a cynic's cynic. I can't figure out what we're doing out together. A cynic and a romantic."  
"You know what they say. Opposites attract. You never can tell when it'll pay off."  
"You think it's worth it?"  
"Could be."  
"Well, I'll at least finish my spaghetti before I go."  
"Good."

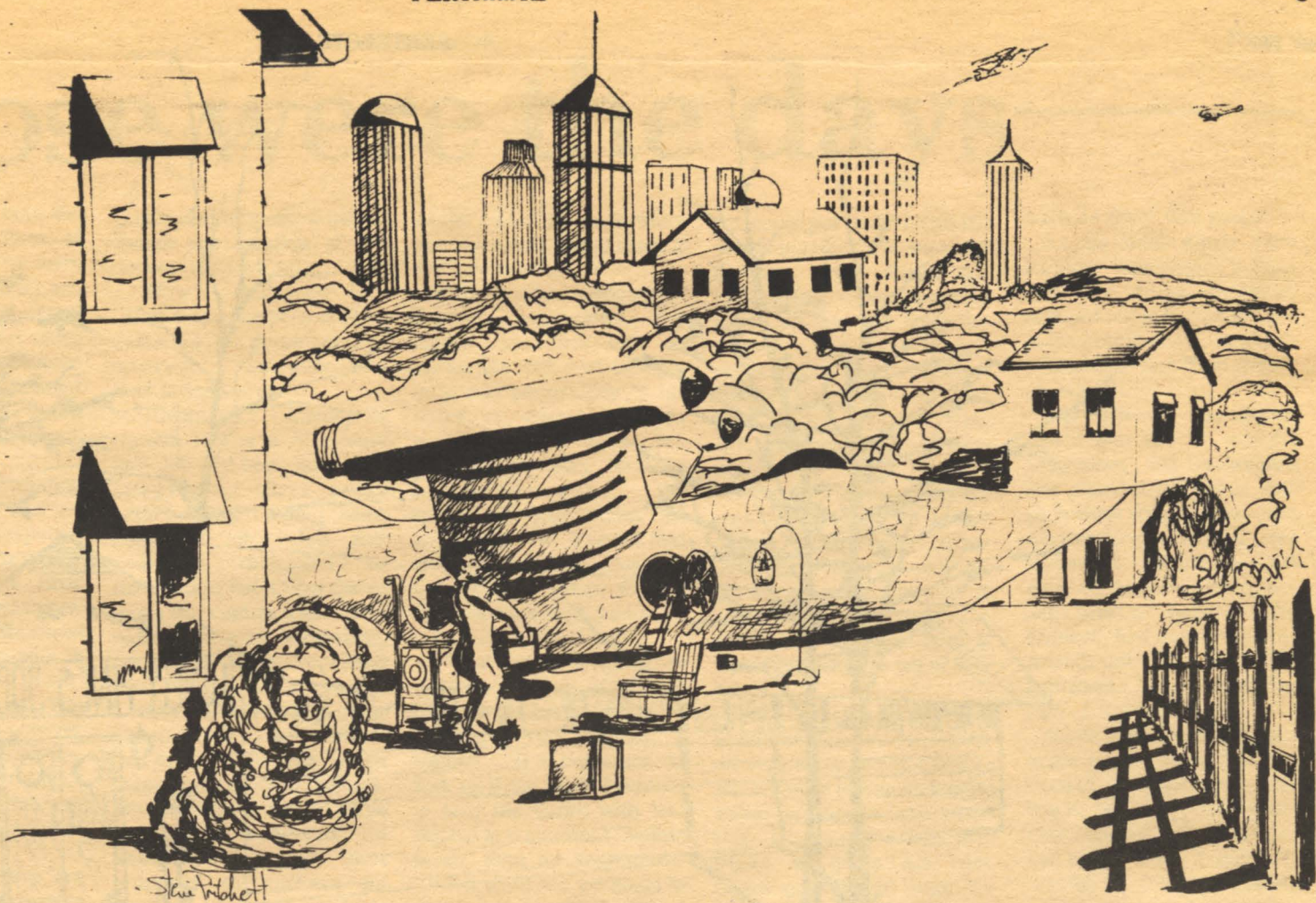
Conversation piece







# The transmix incident



By DALE JOHNSON

Man developed practical interstellar rocket drives by the middle of the 21st century, so, in honor of manifest destiny, he packed some clothes, a few books, his pets, his vermin, his diseases, and his neuroses, and spread across the stars with the determination of a lemming.

He was constantly on the lookout for "other" intelligent races to converse with and from whom he could learn the "secrets of the universe." He had no luck for nearly 500 years, but finally he came across the Audregians, who inhabited Audred IV, the largest planet orbiting Vega. Unfortunately for both races, war broke out almost immediately.

The Audregians were, for the most part, a kind, quiet, peaceful race, but their appearance didn't at all suggest it. They had three legs, two of which were still functional, while the third was vestigial and used only for balance (as kangaroos' tails are). They were proportioned like short, fat people, but were seven feet tall. Their hair was usually shoulder length and blond and their eyes were steel gray. Terrans called them "Quagmon," not only because of their appearance, but also because their entire planet was covered with a two-foot-thick layer of mud.

Once contact was made, plans were made for the leaders of Earth and Audred IV to meet (preferably on Earth, where mud is more easily hidden). The preeminent problem was the language barrier, which the Audregians vowed they could solve. As a result, they added a new bureau to their government: The Transmix Bureau.

The sole purpose of the Transmix Bureau was the manufacture of Transmixers, which functioned as universal translators. (The Audregians had long had the technology to manufacture transmixers, but had never needed them. The Tower of Babel was apparently unique to Earth.)

Zaren was put at the head of the Transmix Bureau. His best Transmix engineer was Castex, who always came to work drunk. No one was alarmed at this; Castex seemed to work better that way. In fact, if Castex ever showed up for work sober (which was rare), Zaren sent him to a bar with orders not to return until he was fairly tipsy. Zaren felt that whatever it took to make the Bureau more efficient was justifiable, no matter how unethical.

Just before the historic meeting between Terran and Audregian leaders, a good will package arrived from Earth. It contained the definitive Hispanglish dictionary (the predominant language on Earth at that time) and various representatives of Terran technology: recordings, holograms, Athenian Sparkle Boxes, antique crystal electro-psionic modules, three bottles of scotch and even an atomically powered scotch pourer.

The dictionary was, of course, immediately sent to the Transmix Bureau and, through a bureaucratic error, so were the three bottles of scotch. Castex promptly smelled out the scotch and decided to try the strange Terran brew in the back room. He took all three bottles.

Unbeknowst to everyone at that time, the substance in

Audregian beverages that causes intoxication is sulfuric acid (hence the origin of the saying, "He has a stomach like a Quagman."), just as ethyl alcohol in Terran drinks produces the same result.

Castex' system had never heard of ethyl alcohol, but after the third bottle of scotch that had changed. His body was in shock. One-eighth of his brain cells were destroyed. He was rendered sterile and never had another child. Plus, he developed a stutter that lasted for 35 years. He staggered out of the back room in all outward appearances drunk as usual, but inside his toast was burning.

No one in the Bureau noticed that the three bottles of scotch were missing or that Castex had been gone for several hours. Zaren just called him over, gave him the dictionary, and, since Castex was the best, put him in charge of feeding the Terran words into the Transmixers.

***"He staggered out of the back room in all outward appearance drunk as usual..."***

Castex tried his best to concentrate and get the job done right, but, because of his fried condition, he soon began to think it would be hilarious to correlate antonyms, or homonyms, or totally unrelated words instead of synonyms, so he did. He didn't remember doing it for thirty years.

++++

The Audregian embassy landed their rocket on the Blue House lawn as requested by Terran leaders. This was to give the population of Earth a thrill, as the meeting was being broadcast over holovision. Unfortunately, the rocket exhaust set the lawn on fire. As soon as secret service men had the fire under control, the Audregian ambassador and his entourage stepped out, all wearing their Transmixers. Then the President of the United World made his entrance and greeted the Audregians. He introduced the members of his cabinet, government leaders, members of the press, his wife, and his brand new baby boy, Darren.

Now, a word must be said about Darren. He was the first child to have been born to a president in office for over 100 years. His face was on holovision practically every day, not to mention all the magazine covers and newsheet articles.

Everyone on Earth was crazy about Baby Darren; many felt tht he was the most beautiful baby they had ever seen and that he was really part theirs. Whenever he got sick or had a birthday, millions of cards flooded the Blue House. Moreover, during the president's bid for

reelection, a "Draft Darren" movement at the convention nearly cost him the monination. That's how popular Baby Darren was.

The Audregian ambassador seemed very taken by the baby. Speaking through his Transmixer, he said, "This is really a human baby?"

"Yes," replied the president, beaming a smile.

"Well, he certainly is a slimy piece of human excrement if ever I saw one," the ambassador said. "He reminds me of regurgitated hydroponics sludge."

The ambassador, of course, hadn't said anything of the sort, but his Transmixer had. The crowd on the Blue House lawn suddenly became dead silent. Two people fainted. As soon as the president stopped gaping, he asked, "What did you say?"

The Audregian gave what passes for a smile to Audregians. "I merely stated that your child reminds me of common sewage. He reeks like a planet-full of molded Celebrezian worm butter."

At this, one of the secret service men lost his mind. He loved Baby Darren like everybody else did, and no one could say things like that about him. In a flash, he pulled out his laser pistol and burned the ambassador's vestigial leg off.

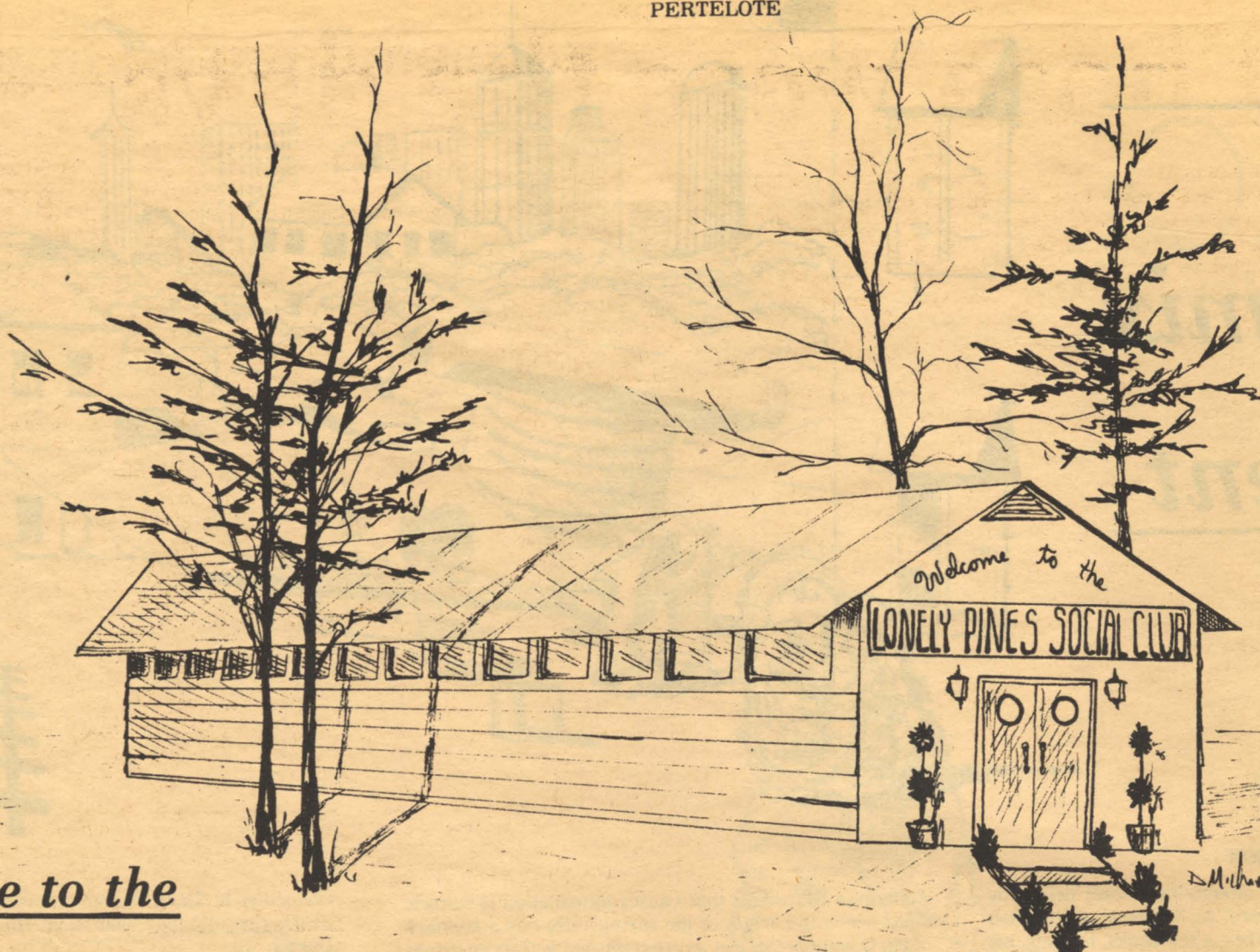
Then he put a burn-hole in the Audregian's head. The other secret service men followed suit and massacred the entire Audregian entourage. The crew of the Audregian ship escaped, however, as they had remained on board during the reception. They went back to Audred IV and told everything.

***"He reminds me of a regurgitated hydroponics sludge."***

The Audregians immediately declared war and attacked Earth. The Terrans massed and counter - attacked. The Audregians wiped out entire Terran colonies. The Terrans destroyed Audregian space ports. This went on for thirty years, which is about how long it took Castex to sober up. (He'd spent all this time in a mental home.) When he realized what he had done, he told the proper government officials the whole story. The Audregians asked for a truce and had Castex tell his story to the Terrans. Peace was promptly declared on both sides.

Castex became a hero for his part in ending the war. Not only did he receive the first Intergalactic Noble Peace Prize, but he was also able to launch a successful political career. He eventually achieved the highest Audregian political office, namely, THE GRAND SMORFEED OF THE AUDREGIAN STATES. He died in office of a disease very similar to Terran cirrhosis of the liver.





Welcome to the

# Lonely Pines Social Club

By ROB SHELTON

The sun was starting to set when I went to see the Lonely Pines Social Club. Shadows from the pine trees fell across the long building and the crickets and tree frogs had already begun their nightly chants. It is completely deserted here in the daytime. The building itself speaks that its purpose was not conceived with sunshine in mind, but rather, the moonlit nighttime.

Lonely Pines is located about one and a half miles beyond Dixie Clay on the winding extension of West

Francis going out towards Broadwell Mill. There is no sign advising the visitor where it is—you just have to know. The only sign is a non-translatable one having something to do with parking. But the beer bottles and cans betray the nature of the establishment.

The building appears to be an old chicken house that has been converted to use by people. Perhaps it never was a chicken house because the only things that give this impression are the 150-foot length and the two extra little roofs above the main

roof which perhaps once were meant to provide a means of letting out excess heat in the summertime.

The front and back have numerous windows of all different kinds, all curtained, not allowing a view of the inside. The walls are covered with asbestos siding and some is coming off. The whole front of the lot is bordered by a fence made from old shipping pallets. There are at least six different pipes sticking through the roof in the front and an unknown number in back. The long side is presented to

the road. There are two TV antennas, both leaning at the same 15 degree angle. The roof has several layers of differently colored and textured asphalt materials in an insane arrangement produced by the necessity to stop leaks. The place is old and established, having English ivy growing up a part of the front outside wall and covering over several windows. There are numerous electrical wires running along the roof. A crepe myrtle tree grows alongside.

Lonely Pines is a black

club. I have never heard of a white going inside. It seems to have a message to speak but one must have black ears to understand it. The size makes promises of many people to meet and a dance floor big enough to really boogie on. The excitement must get high on Saturday night at midnight in the summertime for partygoers who are young and black, full of beer and soul.

Lonely Pines. The name implies an awareness of the tragic in life and an acceptance of it with the resulting courage to get out

and be together and have fun. But it seems its popularity was gone long ago and the place is still here mostly by force of tradition.

An air of neglect hangs about. There is a lot of trash in the yard. Many things give one the impression that Lonely Pines is temporary, that it will be swept away by the flashing plastic lights of modern times but I hope not because it is so quaint and unique and such a forceful reminder of the old-fashioned simple ways of enjoying our bittersweet life.

## 'I want to be real'

By JOE BRYAN

"John!" exclaimed an angry father, "John, come down here now!"

"Yeah," answered John as he climbed down the steps. "What d'ya want?"

"I want you to look at these gas bills. Thirty-eight dollars for this month alone. I can't afford this type of thing. More months like this and you'll be putting gas in the car yourself."

"Okay, okay, I'll take care of it."

"Where do you go anyway to use that much gas?"

"Nowhere in particular. I just get in a mood to go out drivin' and looking for a place to jot down a few

sketches."

"Writing again, huh! When are you going to learn? I mean, how many times do I have to tell you that writing isn't going to get you anywhere. You've got to get a job—a real job that pays real money. You've got to start planning ahead. Money, that and experience is the key to the future."

"Your future maybe. I'm looking for something better."

"Oh, you are! And by writing you're gonna rise to the highest pinnacle and save the world. I see."

"I didn't say that. I just refuse to get caught in the 9 to 5 set with a middle class

house, two car garage, wife, three kids and all day Saturday at the little league. I want more from life."

"That's right—life owes you so much. And it's going to give it to you through dirty novels . . ."

"They're not dirty—they're accurate. I'm writing about the real world. Life isn't sweet little girls growing up virgins and becoming head of the PTA, or strong, determined boys becoming successful businessmen or football superstars and deacons and preachers. It just isn't like that. Don't you see? I'm trying to portray life as I know it!"

"What do you know about life—you're only 19."

"What does age have to do with it? Besides I know enough to know what's real. And that's what I'm going to write about. Not candy canes or roller coasters or Sunday picnics, but the grime and gore that's going on in the cities, the murders in your God-fearing communities, the rapes of those sweet little girls you look to for innocence. That's what's going on."

"And you think you can cure all this with your books and magazines and poems, right?"

"No, I don't expect to cure it. I just want to be realistic

about it. I want people to wake up to the problems and not be content to look through rosy-tinted glasses. I don't want to hide in a suburban ivory tower by night wondering if I'll live to see the next day or maybe someone will break in during the night and scatter my brains across creation and do God knows what to my family. I may not know what to expect, but I know what I don't want."

"What do you want, then? You may not want to write about candy canes and whatever, but it seems you sure want to live it. Sure,

life's hard, but you might as well get used to it, unless you're gonna hide in your books—you seem to think they're safer than, how did you put that, suburban ivory towers."

"All I want is to be left alone. I don't know why no one can understand. Writing is my life. Hey, you're the one sending me to school to get educated. Well, that's what they're teaching me. Would you rather I was an alcoholic or an addict?"

"Of course not, what kind of question is that? But I think I could understand that better . . ."



# Those were the days

By JOE BRYAN

As I look back over those days, only four years previous, I often wonder how I could have been placed in such an awkward position.

Not that I can't appreciate it now. That is not the case at all. It's just that at the time it happened it proved to be a very delicate situation, requiring more tact and diplomacy than I am normally accustomed to.

In short, life in those days was as hairy and crucial as the Confederate States of America could care to remember.

The trouble centered on the presidential election of 1980. Incumbent Jeb Martin—an honest, though shallow, man from Possum Trot, Alabama—had just announced his campaign plans in his bid for re-election when he was issued a challenge by one Buford B. Beauregard to an open debate regarding critical issues of the forthcoming election.

Now Jeb, without any thought or formal advisement whatsoever, agreed wholeheartedly to assume his place in what he thought should be a great event. And, as if this wasn't enough, he actually insisted that Mr. Beauregard choose the site.

The other cabinet members and I knew right off that this was a mistake. Beauregard was a smooth-talking lawyer from El Paso representing the liberal, new Naturalist Party. Knowing this, we could not even imagine what Jeb thought he could accomplish from it all, other than possibly convincing the public what they already knew—that Jeb Martin was a confirmed redneck.

True, Jeb's reputation had increased considerably since he'd become President, but it was still common knowledge that Jeb was the only head-of-state who drove a four-wheel drive pick-up (complete with gun rack and off-road tires) even when on official business, and also that his '57 Chevy was still on blocks in the front yard of his mother's house in Possum Trot. Yet Jeb had this overbearing inclination he could ride his humble beginnings image back into the capitol.

After we accepted the fact that Jeb was going to have his way and proceed with the debate (Jeb was stubborn to a fault), the general consensus of the cabinet was to best prepare our man as possible. We were confused as to the best path to follow.

At first we thought we might stockpile Jeb with vast knowledge and catchy

phrases to impress both the public and media. Then, of course, we realized we were dealing with Jeb Martin and decided to keep Jeb from sticking his foot too far down his throat during the course of the debate. I also thought it might be beneficial to dig up a little dirt on Beauregard.

As it turned out, finding dirt on Beauregard was not as easy as I had anticipated. For two weeks I, along with a staff trained in the finer points of political espionage, searched the inner confines of Beauregard's past only to find nothing. At least, nothing we could use. The only skeleton we did uncover was an old Halloween costume in his secretary's filing cabinet, but that was another story as we found out later.

It seemed the more we looked, the more impressive Beauregard looked. In fact, two of my staff soon defected to his side. The whole venture was intensely frustrating because I knew this man was as conniving as any of the lowest of God's creatures, but far too clever to be caught. Our findings, or lack of findings, only served to reinforce the idea that this debate meant trouble for Jeb.

A letter arrived on a particularly musty day not too long afterward declaring the issues to be discussed and the site of the debate. I remember the day well. Jeb called me into his office in a voice the tone of which I had never heard a human use before. As I made my way into the room, I could not help noticing the absence of color in his face. His eyes were embedded in the back of his head and his lower lip was quivering violently in a sort of epileptic tremble. His body appeared lifeless (except for the tango his bottom lip was performing solitaire).

I studied the room to locate the root of this terrifying seizure that had taken hold of an otherwise calm and collected individual. No bottle was found. When my eyes returned to him, he slowly lifted his right hand towards me. Dripping forth from his extremity was a simple, ordinary sheet of paper, or so it appeared. I took the paper from him and began to read. I fought through the tedious first paragraph which contained Beauregard's usual barrage of meaningless dribble and came at last to what must have been the cause of Jeb's horror stricken state. There, in the middle of the page, in capital letters, was Buford B. Beauregard's sadistic reply to Jeb Martin's most

gracious offer to allow him to choose the location of the debate—RICHMOND, VA.

"How?" muttered Jeb. "How could one person be so dastardly, so despicable, so ornery to..." he paused and took a deep breath.

"Richmond," I thought to myself. It was in Richmond that Jeb had been burned in effigy only three years prior. The occurrence happened after Jeb successfully managed to manipulate the Congress to move the capitol from Richmond to Atlanta. Virginians, angered by the move, rioted and threatened to secede from the Confederacy. As a result, Jeb sent federal marshals to intervene, which only caused more ill feelings. Things calmed for a while until Jeb received an anonymous letter that promised to perform incredible atrocities on Jeb's being if he was ever seen in Richmond again. The news of the note had been, we thought, kept strictly confidential. We even assured Jeb it was a sick hoax. I never felt he had fully recovered, but this reaction was a pretty good indication that he hadn't.

"How?" muttered Jeb, interrupting my train of thought. "How could one person be so dastardly, so despicable, so ornery to..." again he paused and took a deep breath.

This new development threw an even greater monkey wrench into our circumstances. First of all, if the president goes to Richmond, his composure would be shot completely. Yet if he cancelled the debate, the press would have a field day. I knew something desperate would need to take place.

"Silas!" rang out Jeb's voice as it built to a crescendo. (Jeb often called me Silas although I could never figure out how he derived Silas from James Mercer).

"Silas, how could any one person be so dastardly, so despicable, so ornery to..." he paused, took a deep breath and fell even deeper into his trance.

"Jeb," I exclaimed, "snap out of it."

He didn't budge, he simply sat there staring straight ahead. I slapped his face. Still he didn't move. I had often heard that cold water could be used in the revival of unconscious people, so I grabbed for his pitcher which sat beside his desk. The pitcher slipped out of my hands and the water saturated his desk. As I lurched forward in an attempt to correct my error, I inadvertently fell headfirst

at the foot of his desk which somehow caused his chair to fall backwards.

After the sequence reached conclusion, Jeb landed face first into an azalea his wife had brought in to add personality to his office. An allergic reaction soon followed and Jeb wheezed his way back to consciousness. Unfortunately, the azalea did not fare as well, a result that brought his wife close to leaving him. Even to this day, the incident causes a riff in their relationship...

"What are we going to do?" asked Jeb in all the majesty he could muster.

"This is very serious," I replied. "It's beginning to look as if ole Buford intends to play the game with less regard to traditional 'Suthun honor' than we suspected."

"But what are we going to do?" Jeb re-asked with a slight semblance of anxiety in his voice.

"I don't know. We really don't have many options."

I thought for a moment, then it hit me. "Wait, I have an idea," I said. "Suppose we could somehow ally Beauregard with a West Virginian vigilante group. That would make those Richmonders less conscious of your endeavors and shortcomings."

"How the hell do you propose we do that?"

"Didn't Landerson say something to the effect that Beauregard had aspirations of going to college in that area. And didn't he have ancestors up there?"

"That has possibilities. Why don't you check into that and get back with me." I started to leave. "And Silas..."

"Yes," I responded.

"Change your tie. That one's hopeless."

Strangely enough, nothing more was ever said about the West Virginia alliance. We used as much propaganda as we could get away with, but the public never wanted to buy it. By the time the debate rolled by, all seemed lost.

The day of reckoning came at last. Jeb Martin, President, and I took our places opposite Buford B. Beauregard and his representative. In the middle sat newsman Harold Runyon, who I felt a complete incompetent.

The debate continued about as well as could be expected. Beauregard made point after point on prevalent issues such as oil prices, civil rights and trade agreements with the yankees. But this was all expected.

Jeb sat there trying to formulate a catchy speech,

yet could not quite bring his words together. He was still nervous about Richmond, anticipating a psychopath to erase his memory from the history books, even though security had been doubled. He mostly hemmed and hawed about this platform. But this, too, was all expected.

What we had not expected was Jeb showing up at the debate immediately after consuming near a case of potent beer. He claimed it eased his nerves. I submit it made him drunker than a loon. The man was not of this world.

Yet for some unexplainable reason, Jeb came off very witty and charming. His answers to Beauregard's rebuttals made so little sense that Beauregard himself began to doubt his own ramblings. Things began to brighten up for the Martin campaign.

However, at his brightest point, Beauregard looked Jeb straight in the eye and very cockily mouthed, "Richmond."

Jeb's eyes sunk back into his head and his lower lip embarked on another foreign dance. I tried frantically to bring him out of it, but he simply turned to the camera and stated, "How?...How could any one person be so dastardly, so despicable, so ornery to..." and he paused and took a deep breath.



Beauregard must have sensed something as he regained his confidence and began to press the matter. "So ornery to what?" he inquired in his shrill voice. "Silas," muttered Jeb. "Ornery to what," spat back Beauregard.

"How?" shouted Jeb.

"Ornery!" cried Buford.

"Silas, how?" echoed Jeb.

"H a ! ! ! " replied

Beauregard. He looked dead into the camera and began to roll. "How can you dare reelect this babbling idiot to the presidency? Do you want

such as fool? Can you..."

As the final words were leaving Beauregard's lips, Jeb, by some miracle, snapped out of his trance and subconsciously asked, "What does that 'B' stand for anyway?"

Now friends, speculation had it that the 'B' was for 'Belvedere'. But Beauregard had guarded its secret with such close scrutiny that even the most feeble minded were somewhat suspicious. Yet now, on national television, Jeb Martin, honest-to-God redneck, had a city-slicking, smooth-talking, lawyer-type politician up against the wall. I wanted to cry.

Beauregard melted into apple butter right there in front of the entire nation. He began weeping hysterically and confessed that his campaign was Communist funded. He fell to his knees claiming he was an atheist and said he was responsible for over half of the unsolved crimes in the state of Louisiana. And in a fit of childish sentimentality, he promised to dig a latrine for the Andalusia chapter of the Daughters of the Confederate Revolution, the point of which eluded everyone present. It was not a pretty sight to watch this intelligent man self-destruct and collapse into a raving maniac before so many fans.

(As it turned out, the 'B' was for 'Bruce', a name he

held in such disregard it destroyed his chance at prosperity.)

Needless to say, Jeb was re-elected to his third term, after conquering his fear of Richmond. Beauregard was placed under close watch in the asylum at Milledgeville, Georgia. And me, well I resigned my post with Jeb to seek my fortune elsewhere. I decided the limelight was too much for me, so I accepted a position as a shrubber in eastern Tennessee.

Incidentally, I sent Jeb's wife a potted azalea.





## Laughter in the rain

By JEFFREY STEWART

If anyone ever had the last laugh, I do.

The Public laughed at me, ridiculed my theories and actions, made my name synonymous with craziness. They were stupid to laugh, but they rolled with laughter—now they've stopped.

They heckled my followers, called them fools

for the fool. Spread rumours that we were homosexuals, atheists, and schizophrenics. They said we were anti-establishment, anti-industrialists, and anti-humanity. They said so many, many things—but now they are silent.

We exhausted ourselves, trying desperately to educate others. They were far too stubborn; or, more

fairly, they thought our movement, our goal, might stop expansion, might lead to stagnation. Now there is nothing to expand.

We told them.

We marched on factories, demanded reduction of auto exhausts. We warned them of the consequences if those compounds were released into the air. They ignored us;

or, worse still, made us to look the fools. Now they wonder who the fools really were.

They wouldn't stop, said they couldn't stop; the cost would be too great.

So sulfur and carbon flooded the atmosphere, combining with water to form various acids. The rain that fell ate into mortar,

gnawed away at both brick and stone. Walls of buildings weakened. Their own weight brought them down, with the pieces grinding into so much nothing.

The cities became mere mounds of rubble, skylines broken here and there by the twisted metal frames of the once proud skyscrapers. Industry, like its structure, collapsed. Chaos was, and

still is, high.

Now it's my turn to laugh: rain clouds are gathering in the east. I stand here, knee-deep in brick-dust, and I laugh. It's the irony. The only thing left standing is one of the chimneys of a chemical plant.

It's raining now, and I'm laughing. At them . . . and myself.



# The minister remembers

By KEITH GOSSETT

As the Reverend Augustus Phillips lay on his back in the sparkling grass behind the woodshed, he remembered the day when Horace Webb had called on him. It had been a Sunday afternoon and Augustus was resting.

The Reverend had delivered a stirring sermon that morning. He met Horace at the door, having been awakened by the noisy new automobile that the Webbs had bought in Chattanooga. Horace had driven that machine back to Oneonta in one night so his family could drive it to the singing the next day. Such things meant a great deal to men like Horace Webb.

"Evening, Brother Horace," Augustus had said. "Howdy preacher," Horace said as he gripped the minister in a mangling handshake. "Brother Augustus, I been meanin' to ask you when you're gonna' make your decision about them Wrights."

"What decision? I'm just praising God they've been cleared of charges."

"That don't mean they ain't done nothin'."

"Brother Webb, what would you have me do? Turn them out?"

"It's the only respectable thing to do."

"Brother Webb, I'm going to pretend we never had this talk. I suggest that you go home and pray about this...this feeling you have. Now you'll have to excuse me."

Augustus had been shocked at Horace Webb. Horace was a deacon in the church he pastored, and although he was a dominating, pushy man, Horace was usually reasonable.

The minister held his razor before his eyes. The rain-washed sunlight reflected off the steel blade as Augustus lapsed again into memory.

A month after Horace's visit, he had stayed after Sunday services to speak with the minister. Augustus sat with him on the last bench in the church.

"I noticed that them Wrights wasn't in church today preacher," Horace had said.

"There must be sickness at their house."

"Preacher, them people have fell out of the Lord's grace. They ain't been in church since that killin'. The murderers still ain't been caught. Guilt is over them people's heads."

"I'm sure they're just calming the house down. An investigation could be very

harrowing. Besides Horace, why are you so dead-set against the Wrights?"

"Because, Pastor, they ain't fit to be in your flock. Stayin' away from God is a sinner's habit. I done got it all set. The deacons is comin' to my house Thursday night to study on turnin' them people out. I expect you to be there to guide us. Goodbye preacher, and God bless you."

Augustus had muttered a farewell, but his conscience was already at him. All the way home that day, he had told himself that Horace was wrong, that the deacons really didn't feel that turning out was the best course of action. But the Wrights have been out of sight lately, he thought.

Augustus gazed into the tops of the pines rising above him, watching the trees bend in the never-ending wind that blew across the mountains. He felt his grip on the razor slacken.

Augustus had gone to Webb's house on that cloudy Thursday night. He remembered the rolling thunder echoing through the hollows on the road to the meeting. He had gone inside Horace's house and talked with the deacons. Horace was very much the spokesman for the men assembled.

"Well preacher, let's make this short. There's an April storm on the way, and we all got to get things took care of at home before it hits. What's your mind say?"

"I would rather hear the deacons' opinions first," said Augustus.

"I," blurted one of the men. The deacon hesitated and glanced at Horace. "I would recommend turnin' them out." He did not look at Augustus as he spoke.

The others mumbled their "ayes" in rapid succession. Augustus had walked to the window. The winds and thunder had died.

"Take the necessary steps brethren." With that, he left.

As Augustus lay in bed that night, he listened to the crashing of dead branches against the soaked earth, blown by the newly returned storm. The next morning, "this morning," Augustus remembered, he had walked to his mirror on the back porch to shave. He stood staring at the face in the mirror. The bleary red eyes saw the guilt and remorse. The man in the mirror had not turned to his master when he doubted.

Augustus dropped the razor, and as he did so the man let the mirror slide from his fingers and fall.



Art by TERESA FARROW

"A man who works with his hands is a laborer; a man who works with his hands and his brain is a craftsman; but a man who works with his hands and his brain and his heart is an artist."

—Louis Niger

## Talk is cheap

(Continued From Page 6)

The old man said to the Lady with the Sunken Cheeks, "That's exactly right. I complain about little things, and just look at the handicapped people. I used to work with this man that didn't have no legs down below the knee and just had two fingers on one hand. He was born that way. And he wouldn't let nobody do nothin' for him. He done everything for himself. And I'm here to tell you, he could do it, too."

The Lady with the Sunken Cheeks responded, "I believe in helping the handicapped all I can. You know, I think when they can do something for themselves they like to be told that you admire them. Why, I've got to where I just go right up and tell 'em I'm proud of 'em. I always like to help. I always give to Cerebral Palsy. That and the Boys' Ranch."

A middle-aged man sitting by the window put in, "I like to give to the United Appeal, too. Down at the shop where I work I got picked outta my department to head up the United Appeal thing. All the people that was head of their department had to go down to the Cerebral Palsy center where they got them little kids. I remember they was this big old black man in one of the departments—he was about six-seven, weighed about two hundred and forty pounds. And that nigger man was about as cold-hearted as they come. We went down there to that

center, and all them little kids started running toward us. They're just starved for attention, you know. And this little girl about two, three years old come walkin' up to that black man, holdin' out that little hand and a-reachin' up for him to take her. He got down on his knees and took that little 'un in his arms, and I'm tellin' you what's the truth, I ain't never seen a grown man cry so in my life."

The gray-haired old man had by this time had a chance to search the room for other faces he thought familiar. He screwed his face up in deep study, and pointed to an elderly woman near me who sat very quietly and looked extremely tired.

He said, to no one in particular, "I believe that's Miz Wilson." Then, to Horace Calloway he said, "I know it is." She looked up, and he asked, "How are you, Miz Wilson?"

"I'm not Miz Wilson. Brice is my name."

He apologized for the mistake and turned to a woman who had just sat down beside him. He spoke as if to an old friend. "Why, what are you doin' here? I thought you'd be down there workin' at that hardware store."

The woman looked annoyed. "I don't work at the hardware store."

The old man scowled and his breath came out in a short puff of disgust. "Well, I'll be durned if I don't hush my mouth."

"Life does not consist mainly—or even largely—of facts and happenings. It consists mainly of the storm of thoughts that is forever blowing through one's head."

—Mark Twain

Art by BARBARA LETSON



The nurse stepped around the corner and called him, and he went into Dr. Sutton's office. Things were suddenly quiet in the waiting room.

About fifteen minutes later the nurse informed me that I was next, so I moved a little closer to the office. Presently the old man came out and I heard him say to Dr. Sutton, "Well, I appreciate you talkin' to me today."

I waited for him to pay the nurse before I stepped up to the desk for my chart. But instead, the old man only nodded and said, "Bye now. We'll see yuh tomorrow." He tipped his hat, and then the old man was gone.

Mrs. Abercrombie smiled as she watched him leave, and for the first time I can remember, there was a soft, warm humanness in her voice. "He comes here every day. There's nothing really wrong with him, I don't think. I suppose he's just lonely. Anyway, Dr. Sutton always talks to him. I've often complained about him because he takes up valuable time—sometimes Dr. Sutton

sees nearly fifty patients a day—but he never turns that old man away."

She shook her head slowly, handed me the chart and returned to her work.

I went into the office and Dr. Sutton glanced up and asked, "So, what made you decide to come visit me today?"

I described, he prescribed and charged me four dollars for an office visit. (Talk sure is cheap nowadays.)

I paid the nurse and left. And all the way home I thought about handicapped people...and little children with outstretched arms...and lonely old men with unruly hair...

When we got home, I had chicken soup and hot tea with lemon. Mother and I had a very nice talk, and after some time I became quiet...and then I decided I would lie down and put my head in Mama's lap.

There once was a teacher named Cobb

Who was not very good at his job.

He came late to class. He smoked too much grass. In brief? A professional slob!

—Val Hiett

The postman says Janie's a mother.

They each say the kids like the other.

When the child was delivered,

The postmaster quivered. It resembled the milkman's brother.

—Kathy Sheehy

A mental ward inmate named Cane  
Went to France with a beautiful dame.  
He got fresh on a terrace  
In the middle of Paris  
And wound up completely in Seine.

—Dale Johnson



# The milestone

By TOM YOUNG

The alarm buzzer screeched noisily, waking Mal from a sound sleep. He shut it off, wondering what day it was. He fumbled for his watch on the night table. FRIDAY, APRIL 16, it flashed at him.

He staggered into the bathroom and staggered into the shower. The hot spray seemed to give him new life. A ticklish curiosity nagged at him. There was something about today. Then he remembered. Today I am 21. A man.

This realization threw him into deeper thought; 21. He wondered if it really meant anything. He shut the water off, and, after drying, stepped back in his bedroom to dress. He found his father sitting on the bed. He decided to play it cool, not mention the birthday. His father broke the silence.

"Well, son, I guess today you are a man."

"Guess so," replied Mal as he fumbled with his shoelaces.

"Yes, Daddy. What is it, the circus?"

His father looked a little hurt, but brightened a bit as he strode into the hallway.

"C'mon, let's go for a ride."

Mal walked lightly behind him through the back door and into the early morning sunlight. He squinted into the glare as the truck pulled out the driveway. It was the first day his Dad had missed work that he could remember, and

this only further increased his curiosity.

The sun was breaking up the early morning fog over Ramsey Sound as they crossed the Causeway. Mal saw the gulls as they fought over bits of bait left on the catwalk by vagrant fishermen. These were the familiar signs of early morning, and he noticed nothing unusual until, they pulled into his father's service station. The big blue-on-white sign's lettering had been changed from "Thomas Oil Company" to "Thomas and Thomas Oil Company." All he could manage was a weak grin as his father reached across the seat to shake his hand.

"How 'bout it, partner?" his father queried happily.

Mal found it hard to speak as he gripped his Dad's hand.

"What does this mean, Dad?" he asked, struggling.

His father began to explain the advantages and disadvantages, the ups and downs of owning half interest in a prosperous business. Even with the explanation, Mal was still incredulous. The business was his now! Well, almost.

His father continued, stating that he was planning to catch up on a little of that fishing he had always talked about. Mal was to be the boss now.

"When do I start?" he asked eagerly.

++++

That had been two weeks ago. Now Mal was lost in

thought as he pretended to watch a football game on Sunday TV. There had been no problems at first. Mal had worked hard, proud of himself and secure in the knowledge that he was number one, the head honcho, "Mr. Man." Then on payday, one of the older men had decided to test the greenhorn. He winced as he remembered that exchange.

"How 'bout a raise, Jr.?" Ben Michaels asked, smiling.

"You know I can't authorize a raise without talking to Dad," returned Mal.

"You can't do anything without running to 'Daddy' first," the man challenged sarcastically.

"Okay, Ben. Just let me finish paying the other men and we'll talk."

His hands had shaken as

he signed the remainder of the checks. When the last man left, he had turned to Ben and asked:

"What's the big deal, Ben? You're making good money. Lessee, \$4.75 an hour," he had said, looking at the rate schedule and attempting to appear authoritative. "That sounds pretty good to me," Mal had asserted.

"It may sound pretty good to you, Junior, but you don't have a wife and three kids to feed neither. I got to have the money."

When Mal pondered the situation, the man had seemed to have a point. \$4.75 an hour amounts to less than two hundred dollars weekly after taxes. He had made a snap decision and given the man a 15 cent an hour raise. All the things that had come naturally and automatically went awry during close-up.

## Martin Hall at night

By PAMELA HARTDEGEN

As I climbed the sidewalk beside the International House Thursday night, I couldn't see anything in the lot across the street at first. A feeling of desolation suddenly crept upon me, just as it had earlier surrounded Martin Hall.

When four brightly gleaming lights stunned my

eyes, I blinked, trying to escape the loneliness. The brilliant beams seemed to be cooperating with the midnight darkness to spread a veil of isolation throughout the once life-filled lot.

While I stumbled across the International House parking lot, a very dim, simple outline of the building

Everything that could go wrong did.

His dad had exploded when Mal tried to explain what had happened. When he described Ben's belligerent, uncompromising attitude his father had accused him of letting an employee run over him. He had turned his back on Mal and stomped off to the utility shed. He couldn't answer his father's accusation, he had been scared and the man had run over him.

His Dad hadn't spoken to him all weekend, but Mal had noticed that his father seemed to be in thought whenever he observed him working around the house. Mal knew it couldn't be long, that his father was on the brink of an important decision. So he had patiently played the waiting game. Now it began to pay off.

began to appear from under the dreary cloud of detachment that had only seconds before hidden all contour lines. I glanced quickly to my left to notice that the same feelings were grimly roaming around in my roommate's mind.

The closer I got to the street the easier and clearer

His father entered the room with a beer in each hand. He set one down on the table in front of Mal, and settled down in his favorite chair. They watched the game in silence for awhile. Then his father cleared his throat and began to speak.

"Mal, I'd like to apologize for blowing my top Friday. There's really no excuse for it. I guess I expected too much too soon. When you turned 21 I thought you could handle the business. It's just a little early yet."

Mal swallowed his beer.

"Dad, I've been thinking, too. I thought twenty-one meant I was a man, but it's not age that makes the man, it's experience."

"See you at work in the morning, son."

"Right, Dad."

I could perceive the shape of Martin Hall. Even though I

could see the building clearly now, the cover of forlornness that had previously engulfed my senses wouldn't let go and seemed to hover over me as a ghost until I had entered the Student Center across the street from the still dreary, lifeless building.

## The strenuous life

(Continued From Page 5)

and wait for the order for everyone to form up. Derek, back inside, was disappointed when the order came only a few minutes later. He didn't understand why he was treated that way. Still, he was pleased that he had been noticed and spoken to. He thought the sergeant knew him now and would be interested in him.

When the recruits were all formed up on the footprints, the sergeant shouted "Forward March!" Derek thought he marched well and was pleased with himself. But the sergeant mockingly told the platoon as a whole that he didn't really expect them to march but instead condescendingly suggested that they just "walk along like the bunch of crummy slob" they were. Of course Derek didn't realize the description applied to him, too.

The group was quite a sight on the military base. Ninety young men of all different sizes, skin color, dress and hairstyle loping along the road were sure to draw jeers from some of the more advanced recruits. Derek's pride was injured;

he felt that he also was unjustly the victim of criticism through his undeserved association with the other recruits in his group.

After a breakfast of S. O. S. and green scrambled eggs the next stop was the barbershop for their badly needed haircuts. Some recruits looked forward to this symbolic ritual. Samson lost his strength when his hair was cut but a Marine's masculinity and strength is confirmed by the shearing of his hair. The Parris Island barbers give the simplest and fastest haircut in the world using their super-charged - air - pressure - driven clippers. They delight in asking the absolutely most worn out joke: "How would you like it done?" The recruit in the know should always answer, "Oh, just take a little off the sides." When Derek sat down they played this old routine but Derek thought the barber was seriously concerned when he asked him if he had any warts on his head that needed to be watched out for. Derek was relieved to tell the barber that, in fact, he did have a rather large wart on

his scalp close to his forehead hairline.

The clippers plowed through his hair leaving nothing but fuzzy baldness and also sawed off the vulnerable wart. Derek jumped up momentarily and saw some bloody hair fall to the floor. Some blood dripped through his eyelashes and spilled on his upper lip. When he licked that blood and tasted it a thought formed in the back of his mind. He felt it but it wouldn't come out into words. It was a sort of a comprehension lying tactly in his unconscious mind which he could not admit to himself yet. In a shocked, distressful whine Derek said to the barber, "Hey that hurt, I'm bleeding pretty badly and what are you going to do about it?"

The barber replied in a cruel, mock - sissified tone, "Oh, you poor thing, you got a hurt." His tone shifted to one of fatherly advice - giving, "Well, you better get used to it because you're gonna get hurt lots of times on this island." Then in a cold, accusatory voice the thin - lipped, scarfaced

barber said, "Hell, it's good for you, boy." Derek felt a vague looseness in his bowels as the barber whipped the cover cloth off him and punched him with a stiff finger between the shoulder blades signalling the need for Derek to hurry and get out of the way of the next guy.

Outside in formation again, still bleeding, Derek thought surely the sergeant would notice him now. But he looked around and saw a couple of other guys had bloody heads too, one worse than his. The sergeant looked in the barbershop to see if everyone was done. There was no one left except the barbers sweeping huge masses of different colored hair. He stepped outside and stood at attention, thumbs on trouser seams. His eyes swept over the formation and looked directly at Derek who licked at another drop of blood. The willful sergeant ignored this. Derek was disheartened. The order to march rang out across the flat island and platoon 289 stepped out toward the next station along the sequence of initiation into the strenuous new life.

## Shanna

(Continued from Page 2)

he had spilled and the china he had broken!

Jeffrey had been a strange sort of creature. No one had ever seen him except Shanna, but she had once consented to describe him to Connie.

"He's real tall," she had said. "And he has yellow feathers all over his body, so he doesn't need clothes. He has a real long neck that he can turn all the way around, so he can see behind him. Only he can't see too good, but that's okay," Shanna explained to her mother, "because I can lead him around. He has long skinny legs that are as tall as me and great big feet and he can run real fast. Sometimes he picks me up and runs real real fast and I tell him where to go. Oh yeah," she had said, "I almost forgot. Jeffrey thinks everything is funny and he laughs too big. I tried to explain how sometimes we gotta be quite, but he just wouldn't listen to me."

As Connie thought of him

now, she wondered why she had ever been sorry when he left. Funny how he had been so much a part of her daughter's life for so long that he had become a part of hers, too.

Then when Shanna entered the fourth grade, she never mentioned Jeffrey anymore. One afternoon, Connie ventured to ask about Jeffrey.

"Where's Jeffrey been lately?" she said.

"I don't know. Just gone."

"Gone where?"

"How should I know? He just left, that's all."

"Oh," Connie sat down, a little stunned by her daughter's unconcern. Shanna must have sensed something of Connie's feeling, because she came to her mother and put her arms around her neck. For a moment Shanna had patted her mother's head reassuringly.

"It's okay Mom," she said. "After all, he was only pretend."



# The best

By TOM YOUNG  
(Characters: Two Pro Basketball fans.)

"Take it to the hoop, man!"

"C'mon, big D, you gotta stop that guy!"

"There ain't no stoppin' that guy, clown!"

"We'll just see, buster, we'll just see... Look at that block!"

"Pure luck, pure luck!"

"Hell, I'd rather be lucky than good any day!"

"It must be luck, cause ya'll sure ain't no good. Hey, boy, get up here with them Cokes!"

"Be careful you don't drown, fool!"

"Gettin' tired o' your mouth. The Dukes are gonna take this game!"

"Well, son, lessee you put your money where your mouth is!"

"A fiver, man... a fiver, and I'll give ya six!"

"Okay, six is fine. I'll give you the tie, you'll probably need it!"

"Time will tell, time will tell. The scoreboard will tell the story."

"Hah, man, the Hawks are a second half club, and the

Dukes are only up by eight!"

"It might as well be a million, buddy. The Dukes are hot, 'specially Moore, an' there ain't no stoppin' 'em!"

"Don't be so sure. You may be out five in another hour."

"It'll be money well spent if I am. Whattta helluva game!"

"Haveta agree with ya there. Couldn'ta picked two more evenly matched teams."

"Hey, man, why don't we just call off the bet and watch the game."

"Fine with me. Here, let me buya a beer."

"Hey, you're alright, man!"

"No sweat. Last one to finish their brew has to sniff Moore's sweatsocks. Go!"

A football player named Ty Was asked in class, "Where's Versailles?" He said with a grin, "It's in Michigan" He failed—but still doesn't know why.

— Mary Johnson

## S. 2

The life I love is mine and mine alone.  
I do much more than just exist in time.  
I dance, I write, my life I don't bemoan  
I spend my days in efforts to make lines rhyme.

These lines my master have become of late.  
To pen my thoughts for all to know, I guess  
Is meant to be my course, which set by fate  
Allows the ship of soul to sail—confess.

Confess in rhyme the lines of lust for life  
That spoken words just say, just sound, blurt out.  
My lines and life portray the fun and strife  
I'm fused from dancers, marchers, parasite lout.

Writers save sanity time after time.  
The conscience clear is the fruit of rhyme.

—Keith Gossett

## Acknowledgements

This is my first and also my last edition as editor of the Pertelote, so I hope you enjoy it. I would like to thank my staff, Mr. Jerry Harris, The Art department, and Mr. Opal Lovett for all the fine work that they did.

I am sorry that all the pieces that were turned in to be printed were not printed, but we do have a space problem.

The decisions as to what was to be printed was hard, but I am sure you will enjoy the material that we have chosen for you.

Thank you for picking up a copy, because it is YOUR literary supplement.

Enjoy it, and happy reading.

# A timely ballad

Half a mile, half a mile,  
Half a mile onward  
Onward up Pelham  
Walked the Six Hundred.

Onward the gallants stalked  
Frozen, they barely talked  
All up old Pelham  
Walked the six hundred.

Skies opened—rain down fell,  
Soaked students cried, "This is Hell!" Still  
Bravely they walked—and well  
Walked the six hundred.

Cursing as skins turned blue  
Cursing their teachers, too!  
Oaths and foul curses flew

From the six hundred.

Frost in the frozen air  
Mud, red mud everywhere  
"Is PAB up there?"  
Some lost soul wondered.

Smelling burned pine-trees' smoke,  
One cracked a bitter joke:  
"Can't even buy a Coke!"  
(Sour stomachs thundered.)

Grumbling and mumbling  
Back to the dorms they went,  
Back to the shacks they bent,  
Oh! Noble Six Hundred!

—Mary Johnson

# The midnight ride to Salem

By KAREN GRIFFIN

Midnight. A band of adventurous college students pile into three automobiles, all of which are noted for their speed, maneuverability, and ability to sputter and eventually go dead in an emergency. In a chorus of shouting and laughing, they speed along Pelham Road, traveling north out of the city of Jacksonville.

About two miles ahead lies Germania Springs Park. The students pass by, some of them glancing at the now-quiet pavilions. Just beyond the park, a series of amber lights flood the buildings of the Federal Mogul plant.

As they near their destination, the shouting decreases and finally stops. A certain feeling of nervous anticipation takes over. They turn left and go across the railroad track which runs parallel to the highway. They are less than half a mile away.

Although it is not a cold night, a chill rushes over their bodies: icy-cold, prickling fear. The full moon casts eerie shadows as it peeks through the tops of the trees, and as the students approach the clearing, expands its light across the object of their search.

The cars stop, and slowly the students get out and stand close together, no one daring to move one inch forward alone. A half-dozen trembling girls clutch the arms of a half-dozen would-be macho males and gaze, wide-eyed. The old Salem Church stares back, the once-white frame structure now merely a broken, dilapidated shell. Columns used to support an eave that extended over the front steps. A recent storm has

caused the columns to collapse and the eave to fall over the side of the porch.

Gathering their courage, the students ascend the steps and walk inside. The girls tighten their grip on their boyfriends' arms as they listen to the story of Salem Church.

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Years ago, Salem Church was a normal black country church. Since transportation was limited, services were held twice a month and lasted all day long. One Sunday afternoon, the congregation fled in terror as a group of reputed Devil-worshippers invaded their sanctuary, screaming wildly. It is said that to this day they still have secret meetings in the abandoned church for the express purpose of paying tribute to the Prince of Darkness. Some say their strange chants can still be heard at times and that often these chants are followed by the blood curdling screams of people who have been made victims of human sacrifice.

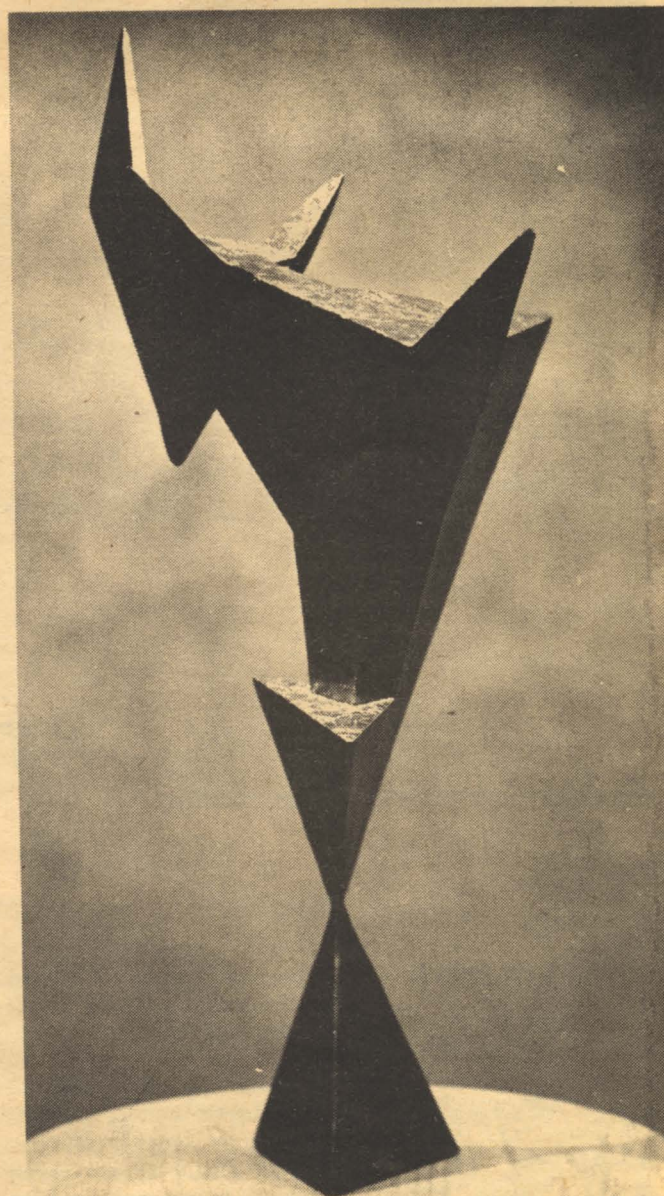
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The students gasp and shiver at this weird tale of evil ritual. Someone turns on a flashlight and begins to shine it around the room. Suddenly, two of the girls shriek wildly and point to the middle of the dusty floor. Large rocks have been placed in a circle, resembling a campfire. In the center are a number of broken, bloody animal bones.

Then, without warning, a hideous, roaring, thundering sound pierces the night, and the students race to their cars in horror. They flee amidst spinning tires and a cloud of dust. The sound seems to get closer and closer... they cannot

escape. The faster they go, the nearer and louder it seems. Their hearts beat furiously. Finally, they reach the end of the road, only to be blinded with a mass of flashing red light. The awful sound is coming straight toward them, no longer a mere sound but an ugly black hulk pounding louder and louder and breathing black smoke.

The students sigh in relief as the thing passes by them. Thank God! It's only the one o'clock train.



Art by MICHAEL ALLISON

"Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson





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# *The bench*

By NAN HUTCHINS

A bench sits underneath an oak tree next to Bibb Graves. At first glance it may seem like any other bench and just another tree. But walk quietly past both on any starry night when the weather is not too cold and you will see, if you have any sentiment at all, that this is an extraordinary tree and bench. Usually, if the night is right, you will find two

shadowy figures which, if you don't look closely, might appear as one.

What is it about this tree and bench that is so conducive to quiet meetings?

Step a little closer. Can you feel the breeze melting down through the leaves and dripping onto your shoulders? If you happen to be standing under that tree in the early fall, the crinkled leaves will try to tell you

secrets whispered there many years before. But it is not until you sit down on that bench that you are able to understand exactly why the setting is so appealing.

If the bench is pushed right up next to the tree, and the leaves are fully grown on the overhanging branches, two people, if they scrunch real close, can sit and not be seen by passers-by. They can watch the commotion on

campus and still be as far removed from it as the moon that always seems to be peeking through the leaves.

Romance, by the way, is not the only thing this bench and oak tree are for. On Sunday afternoons, when there is a little nip in the air, or in the summer, when the shadow of the tree is so tempting, it is a perfect place to relax alone. Surprisingly, it is usually quiet

and makes for a solitude that is not really lonely, because there is always a squirrel or caterpillar, sometimes even a butterfly to keep you from being totally alone.

Places like this oak tree and bench are rare. Even rarer are the people who take time enough to enjoy them, which is all right with me with me, because I would really hate to have to stand

in line for the bench as well as for my registration packet, my registration appointment, registration fees, ....

There once was a student named Sue  
Whose spelling made teachers turn blue.  
She couldn't spell Kat,  
Had trouble with gnatt.  
Her papers were bad  
Brunswick's Stu.

—Leanne Daniel